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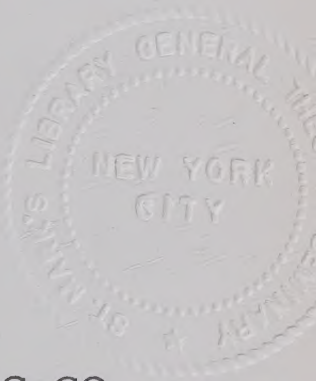
- - By - -

RT. REV. IRVING P. JOHNSON, D.D.,
Bishop of Colorado

- - and - -

Editor of The Witness

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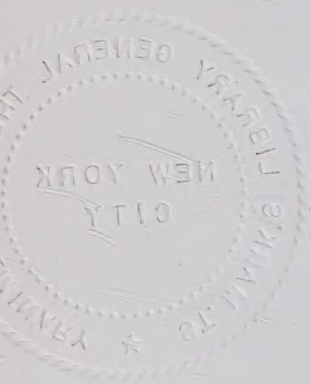


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FOREWORD

CLEAR thinking and the application of sound common sense principles to the practice of the Christian religion are the characteristics of the writings of the Bishop of Colorado in the editorial columns of *The Witness* for the past eight years. Shams, unrealities, conventionalities have been laid bare by his trenchant wit. His keen sense of humor and large hearted sympathy has lifted his message out of the sphere of caustic criticism and enabled him to challenge his readers to a life of reality and constructive practice in the building up of the Kingdom of God.

These articles have been produced in the midst of the strenuous life that falls to the lot of a Bishop of the Church in the Middle West. Railroad trains and stations, with a suit case for a desk, have been the necessary Editorial sanctum in which most of them were born.

For this reason they are all the more valuable and thought compelling. His observant eye sees clearly the foibles and weaknesses of ordinary human nature. His sharp pointed pen, dipped in the ink of good-nature and ready wit, outlines pictures of men and women as we really are. His faith in the love of God is unfailing. He sees clearly and believes wholly in God's power to redeem humanity through the Church as we catch the vision of what

the Church actually stands for in the lives of men. Bishop Johnson's contribution in enabling men and women to see the vision and inspiring them to live it more earnestly has been outstanding and unique.

This book is well worthy of a wide circulation amongst them as the expression of a real man's religious faith and practice.

JAMES WISE,
Bishop of Kansas.

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PART I

RELIGION IN AMERICA

Cushioned Pews

WE are always thanking God because of the sins we do not commit, whereas God is ever testing us for the things that we are trying to do.

What the Church needs is those who serve, and what the Church gets is men who do not drink nor swear.

Christ came among us as one who served, and we go among men as those who have never disgraced ourselves.

Respectability is one thing and service is another, and the one cannot take the place of the other.

A servant may be perfectly respectable and absolutely worthless to us, for we do not advertize for ornaments but for workers.

For after all, character is a by-product of service, not to be sought directly but rather to be obtained indirectly.

If you want to show your love for Christ, do something in His name and your love will begin to have a reality.

You are not serving a definition of God, but a Master of men, and He expects you to serve.

The problem which confronts the Church is, "How can we transform a cushioned pew into a working bench?"

If we succeed we must reverse a great deal that has become custom in our comfortable parochial lounge rooms.

In the first place the Church must not become a club with a recognized social status and the atmosphere of material prosperity.

The end does not justify the means, and an expensive program does not excuse us for adopting secular standards.

I do not know who invented the cushioned pew and the parquet circle in our modern churches.

When a man selects the best seats in the sanctuary because he can afford to pay for them, he forgets that God is not pleased that he should choose the higher seats.

Let him, if he be a Christian, give the largest subscription and then, because it is hard for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, take the lowest seat.

He doesn't go to God's House for his own comfort but for sacrifice.

Sacrifice is a hard thing for him to make.

In this world he has the good things; then in God's House let him choose the hard things.

Why not? For it would seem to be what his Master would have done.

At least that is what He indicated when He marked those who chose the higher seats.

If a prosperous man desires to make his religion real let him give much and ask little.

My experience is that our wealthy members have been in the habit of giving little comparatively and demanding much relatively, to their spiritual vision. That is why the Episcopal Church has such well-ap-

pointed parish churches and such poorly supported charitable institutions.

Better have wicker chairs and well-equipped hospitals than cushioned pews and poorly supported institutions.

In the next place let us appraise our service list.

The early celebration of the Holy Communion is the most devotional service that we have and therefore the poorest attended. It is in the quiet of the early morning; it has no mixed appeal. We go because we would be with Christ; not to hear a preacher, nor a choir, nor to be seen of men. We go purely and solely to give ourselves, our souls and bodies to be a holy and living sacrifice to God which is our reasonable service. We go that we may dwell in Christ and He in us.

The effort to go is a sacrifice; the effect of going is His blessing.

The hour of eleven is the hour that is regarded as sacrosanct for worship on Sunday.

It has become so by use.

It is the time when we can get "those without" to come, so with a strange inconsistency we demand that it shall be used as a service for "those within."

Our missionary instinct is made secondary to our religious selfishness.

We want a service that we will enjoy at that time so we have either Morning Prayer or a High Celebration.

Neither of these services appeals to those without.

The one is tedious; the other by its nature is for Christians only.

Of course, if we could have a time after the sermon when non-Christians could retire, the Eucharist might be profitably used.

But no! If we do that, then Christians also join the procession and turn their backs on Christ's promised presence there.

Surely it is better taste for a guest to push back his chair and leave his host and guests in the middle of the meal when he has had enough, than for a Christian to bolt from the Lord's Supper.

The intolerable rudeness of modern Christians to the living Christ can be excused only on the ground of their invincible ignorance of good manners.

But the very fact that outsiders can be induced to come to church at eleven ought to make Christians keen to have a service which is adapted to the needs of those who are ignorant of the Church's ways, and yet which reflects the rich devotion of our inheritance.

In some way the General Convention should provide a service for eleven o'clock, other than Morning Prayer which is too long and complicated, and other than the Eucharist unless it can designate the place at which the unbaptized and excommunicate may retire.

And in the third place, preaching has to undergo some sort of a major operation.

I do not see how a young man, trained in an academic atmosphere, full of half-digested theories and without any real experience can preach the Gospel acceptably to those whose problems are in the kitchen and the shop.

Of course they could and would if they realized that they were to know Christ and Him crucified in their own spiritual combat, and then preach out of their own experience.

But your young preacher is full of definitions of God, and opinions about social service, and ideas about religious education, and panaceas for reforming secular relations and theories of spiritual philosophy; so that the man on the street is neither interested nor profited.

For your tyro begins to preach where his theological education left off and is entirely oblivious of the fact that his congregation never has completed a theological training. And I do not see after he begins to preach, just when and how he is going to learn what to preach and how to do it.

The world is hungry for the gospel of Christ but they are not interested in theological essays, even though the English be faultless and the ethics commendable.

The Christian faith needs a new emphasis in preaching and in practice.

We need to learn that we are not above our Master; that He came not to be ministered unto but to minister; and that we go to church to forget self and to practice His presence.

Money selfishness is mean but not any meaner than religious selfishness.

The grace of Christ is like the sunlight which brings fertility to the field which has been properly prepared and therefore is in a receptive state. The

same sunlight will bake the very next field into hard unproductiveness.

It is not enough to let the sunlight in—the ground must be broken up by penitence and irrigated by the waters of life, if the seed sown is to bring forth fruit.

Let us stop fooling ourselves with our religious fancies.

Unless we are willing to lift up our hearts unto the Lord we must not expect His grace to be sufficient for us.

Church-going is not the end of Christian practice but the beginning of Christian service.

We will really give thanks unto the Lord, when we carry into the House of God, the spirit which He desires. And that spirit is not "What can I get out of this service?" but "What can I give to God through this service?"

It is equally true of church-going as of everything else, that he who goes to save his life will lose it, while he who goes to gain his life will find the joy and peace which come from service rendered.

Figs or Thistles

OUR Lord had the saving grace of humor. "Do men gather grapes of thorns and figs of thistles?" is a very whimsical question. It is a shame that so many stupid leaders have insisted that dullness is a sign of piety and that humor is an instrument of Satan. Satan may be cynical and even witty but Satan has no real humor. The words that we have quoted have a context that it may be well for us to observe.

They follow the warning that we are to beware of false prophets, and the intimation that we shall know these false religious leaders by their fruits.

The two kinds of fruits which false teachers seem to produce are those which have the spikey qualities of the thorn and the rasping quality of the thistle.

He unquestionably had the Pharisees and Sadducees in mind when he spoke of false leaders, for they were the popular leaders of his time, so popular that they finally succeeded in crucifying the man who exposed their falsity.

In the same sermon on the Mount the Lord tells us of two kinds of righteousness;—the wrong kind and the right kind;—the wrong kind brings the fruit of falsehood, the right kind brings the fruit that He was so laborously endeavoring to produce.

(1) "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of Heaven."

(2) "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His

righteousness: and all these things shall be added unto you."

It is perfectly legitimate to apply this test, which He asked us to apply, to the popular religious movements of today and to ask ourselves how much of our religious leadership is destined to produce thorns and thistles and is rather dubious about the value of grapes and figs.

The first characteristic of these false prophets, then and now, lies in their tremendous popularity.

They were backed by an innumerable company of little thorns and little thistles, which were never quite so happy as when they were pressing their ugly crown upon the Savior's brow, or thrusting their spikey lances into His side.

Neither God nor righteousness can be determined by a referendum and mere numbers do not justify a cause.

The number of the names who followed the Master through it all were one hundred and twenty grapes and figs. The thorns and thistles were beyond count which same is characteristic of any badly cultivated field.

Neither does the rasping assurance of thorns and thistles overweigh in God's sight those who practice His righteousness in secret as they were bidden.

If you keep the outside of the platter clean by a certain abstinence from non-respectable sins you can fool the people into thinking that there is no uncleanness inside. Popularity is no sign of virtue.

The motive of Pharisaic righteousness is to justify

oneself and its concomitant quality is to despise others.

The Pharisees and Sadducees could not endure contradiction, any more than the extreme partisans in the Church or out of it today can endure contradiction or rebuke.

Is is characteristic of both the high Pharisee and the broad Sadducee that they despise those who differ from them and bitterly resent those in authority who would curb their dogmatic utterances either for or against the tradition of their fathers.

Whenever you find petulance or cynical anathemas you may be certain of that mind which St. Luke describes in the following language, "And as He said these things unto them the Scribes and Pharisees began to urge Him vehemently, and to provoke Him to speak of many things; laying wait for Him and seeking to catch something out of His mouth, that they might accuse Him."

These ancient Pharisees believed in making men righteous by legislative enactments; and the Sadducees sought the same end by daring speculative assertions.

They were utterly oblivious to the graciousness of Christ and loudly invoked that righteousness which was by the law, or else tried to break down men's faith by airing their own doubts and speculations.

Both Pharisee and Sadducee were adepts in substituting the laws or opinions of men for the law of God.

They were like many of our sectarian ministers

today who loudly proclaim against the use of wine, while they deliberately remarry people against the expressed law of Christ. If this isn't straining at gnats and swallowing camels, it is a piece of glaring inconsistency.

It seems to have no weight with them that Christ said that he who marrieth her that is divorced committeth adultery.

Modern Pharisaism is like the ancient thorn in that it scolds those sinners who sin against the flesh, toward whom Christ was conspicuously kind and tender, and are indifferent to those who commit meanness under the protection of the law.

Pharisees invoked prejudice against the sweet reasonableness of Christ, and today large religious bodies sanction a secret order which commits acts of intolerable meanness and cowardly cruelty in order, they say, that God may be justified.

Whatever may be the marks of Christ, they are not the marks of the Pharisee or the Sadducee. He did not appeal to prejudice nor philosophy. He was kind toward those who differed from Him in their religious views.

He frankly told the Samaritans that "they worshipped they knew not what," and then complimented them on their individual acts of mercy and gratitude.

He could see good in the inveterate enemies of His religion.

He was compassionate toward those who were the victims of fleshly sins and rebuked the elder brother

who was a glaring instance of harsh intolerance. He was extremely severe to those of His own company who failed Him in their loyalty and comprehension, but He could forgive those who crucified Him for they knew not what they did.

American Christianity needs sorely to cultivate its grapes and figs and to get rid of its spikey qualities.

Its greatest lack today is not theological comprehension but wholesome fellowship which will attract the common people, even if it loses the wise and mighty.

The Church was never advanced merely by its "wisdom after the flesh," nor by its "itching after the dollar," but solely by its ability to preach the whole gospel of Christ as it has received the same, with the compassion of Christ toward sinners and His accessibility to the fellowship of the ordinary man.

Somehow the Church lacks flexibility in its invitation to those without.

Some attribute this to the fact that common men cannot accept this or that doctrine, but would come into the Church if the bars were let down in doctrinal requirements.

Others think that the Church should come out more openly for law enforcement and civic interests.

I do not think so. What is needed is to acquire more graciousness and less stiffness of manners; more fellowship and less of the exclusive caste; more human touch and less ecclesiastical manners; more kindness and less self consciousness.

The most far reaching and permanent results are attained when men can combine a definiteness of religious conviction with an attitude of cordial kindness toward all men.

It was characteristic of the Christ that He could tell the Samaritan: "You worship you know not what," and yet win the Samaritan to His person.

Christ did not water down his assertions to please the intellectuals of his day. Rather he allowed the intellectuals to pass Him by while He sought for those who needed Him.

Because you say "I know" therefore your sin remaineth but to those who said, "I sin," He forgave the sinner and inspired him with a new purpose.

The Church could afford to ignore the whole group of intellectuals, if it only could learn how to be so attractive to sinners that the common people would hear her gladly.

Stalactites and Stalagmites

A GOOD deal that we read would seem to indicate that the Church of the past was in some way inadequate for the people of the present, whereas, I cannot help feeling that the people of the present are somewhat inadequate for the treasure that they have inherited. Somehow, spending a million dollars on a prize fight intensifies that feeling.

An organization which has produced such children of God as the Church has produced in every generation can still produce their like, if it can find the material out of which saints are developed.

The difficulty today is that the age is not interested in producing saints, but is concerned in solving problems, whereas Jesus Christ was not disposed to solve problematical mysteries, but to make saints out of all sorts of queer materials.

The woman of the town was not a problem for Christ to solve by the aid of a clinic, an executive secretary and a checkbook; neither was she a social problem which He proposed to card index. The woman of the town was a sinner to whom He offered His own personal sympathy and help; if she accepted His grace, she became a new creature; if she rejected His proffer to help, she died in her sins.

Capital and labor were abstract questions which He left to academic philosophers, while He made His appeal to the rich young man who went away sorrowful, because he could not make the sacrifice

which Christ suggested; and called the laboring man from his nets to follow Him.

The work of the ministry is not, I fancy, essentially different since the disciple still is as his Master.

The real sign of efficiency in the Christian pastor is still the personal note rather than the academic theory of how things ought to be done. Many of our clergy may be men of quite ordinary talents, of rather ineffective methods and of somewhat ancient ideas, but their really Christian characteristic is that they persevere in holding up a very high ideal of worship and service to a very perverse generation.

In some ways it is rather tragic to be a bishop in the United States. One sees so much from the vantage point of his high place. One is not impressed with the fact that vestries who are seeking pastors are so much concerned with spiritual qualities of human sympathy, personal holiness and devout habits as they are with the more mundane and more superficial characteristics of mixing, personal appearance and cultural manners.

The Church is one of two things: It is either something sent down from above or else it is something built up by human ingenuity. Of course, in a sense, it is both, but to use the simile of stalactites and stalagmites in a cave—the one is from above, the other built up from below, but the initiative is from above and the stalagmites are the result of drippings from the stalactites, never the reverse.

Now, as I see religion, the Church came before the sects and the sects are in a sense stalagmites. And they possess one great advantage over the Church. They are nearer the earth. Consequently, the sectarian leader has the advantage of being just a little higher than the cave dwellers.

If you will note the leader of any sectarian body, he is standing for just the sort of thing that his people want. His leadership and their prejudices are a unit. To follow him is easy, for he visualizes to them that which they would build. It is not so much, "Set me upon the Rock that is higher than I," as it is, bring the Rock down to where I can step on it without much effort.

Whatever certain secularly minded ministers of this Church may say, the whole idea of the Church as embodied in her creeds, liturgies and formularies is that grace is from above and man may be lifted up by it, but he may not make of it a mere earthly process.

One asks why so many of our ministers desire to take the supernatural out of the Church, and why they do not want to leave the Church in order to propound their theories?

The answer is simple: They know the ephemeral character of mere human institutions. They know that stalagmites do not grow without stalactites to infuse them. So they desire the stable character of a divine institution which has been built up and preserved by belief in the supernatural in order to give a solidarity to the ideas which would deprive the

gospel of all supernatural grace. In other words, they desire to use the labors of a long line of stalactites in order to create stalagmites that they claim to be just as wonderful. But they are not. In a contest between the two for beauty, the stalagmite is hopelessly outclassed.

It is important always to remember, on listening to their plausible theories, that such theories are and have always been unable to grow unless they depend upon a supernatural background for their existence.

Truly, the law came by Moses and he may have learned a good deal of it from Egyptian sources, but grace came by Jesus Christ and no man has been able to furnish a substitute.

This factor, however, has its effect in the Church.

The man who rejects the supernatural has the advantage of getting all his drippings from the stalactites and yet remaining close to the earth.

In other words, it is mighty easy for a priest of the Church who believes very little and yet looks like any other priest to get the close following of laymen who believe very little and are satisfied with appearances.

It is this factor which separates a good many of our clergy from the close discipleship of the bulk of the laity. And in this the Church is unique. It also separated the laity from following our Lord.

So long as He healed people and told them parables and fed them they followed him in large numbers. When He began to say, "Except a man be born of water and of the spirit he cannot enter the

kingdom of heaven," they asked, as did Nicodemus, "How can these things be?"

So long as He gave them the loaves and fishes they flocked to Him, but when He said, "Except a man eat my flesh and drink my blood, he hath no life in him," then many walked no more with Him and His discipleship dwindled from that time on.

People are not prone to build up their Christian character by the industrious process of receiving His grace. They either want God to convert them by a sudden miracle, or else they want to build their own towers to heaven.

I have known many of these priests who boast that they do not believe in the supernatural character of grace. They are good companions in the easy reaches of life, in the drawing room, on the golf course, or anywhere on a nice summer day. They are fairly well up in solving the problems of life in the abstract, but are rather incapable of understanding the mystery of poverty or the grace of speaking to the individual who is in trouble; they are rather dumb before the mysteries of sickness and death.

To them, religion is a cultural rather than a regenerating process; sin is something which is bad form; death is a puzzle that had best be dealt with by euphemisms.

It is not strange that prosperous people think of eternal life as merely a continuation of their present prosperity, but God forbid that heaven should be a confirmation of the cultural smugness which char-

acterizes earthly prosperity and the tragic inequalities which is so characteristic of our industrial system.

But the way out is not to rail at the system, but to regenerate the individuals who otherwise would ruin the best system which mind could create.

Now, regeneration is something which comes from the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life, and it is our privilege as Christians to receive the grace that we perceive has come from the body of Christ in all ages.

The only saving clause in the world as we may know it may be found by a close study of the parable of Dives and Lazarus, in which God steps in and fixes the compensation.

Sects and Insects

TIME was when society was shaken to its foundations by religious controversy. Religion was the one vital issue. The great parish church was the outstanding building in the community; the rector was the parson, or the person, to whom the people turned for help and counsel; the service at the high altar was the great event of the week and the anathema of the Church was more dreaded by princes than was the revolt of the people.

Unquestionably men abused the privileges of their high office, and prelates were not always distinguished by humility or spirituality.

Then arose certain men who disputed with these great men as to their credentials, and there was war in the Kingdom of God.

The prophet rose up against the priest and the power of the Church was broken.

The principle of strife and dissension replaced that of confident assertion.

Great sects arose, which agreed neither with the Church, not with one another.

Calvin and Luther and Zwingli put forth their confessions of faith, and the world rejoiced because the Church was no longer the dominant force that it had been. Not that the world fared any better. With all of its faults, the Church was a lenient landlord and she was ever kindly to the poor.

Her leaders were but men, and when those men who were born to leadership, threw off the mantle of

religion, they became even less kindly and more brutal than they were before.

Under the Georges, England was still ruled by men, irreligious men, and the sordid brutality of the times was unrelieved by pious princes or kindly priests.

And after the Georges came the age of Saurian corporations and Simian aristocracy and sordid politicians.

In truth, the world was still ruled by men and the absence of religious domination did not produce more kindly masters nor more contented masses.

The sects went their way and soon fell into the habits which they had dethroned.

The post-reformation period did not produce kindly pastors or charitable courtesy.

After all, whether the world leaders have been Christians, Turks, Atheists, Sectarians, or Politicians, they have all been men and have in their day, illustrated the principle that "man being in honor hath no understanding but is compared to the beasts that perish."

When we say that the Church was to blame or the state was to blame, or the sect was to blame, it isn't so. We are merely assuming an alibi for the real culprit. Man is to blame — selfish, sinful, silly man, who ignores God and deceives himself.

Whether he be priest, preacher, professor, politician, or prince, he is prone to be a tyrant when he finds himself clothed with power.

Having found the guilty man, let us see what has

happened. When the Church was a big thing it produced big men. They may not always have been kindly men, but there were kindly men among the host that filled the churches.

It would be hard to find a St. Francis today; it might be worth while to put up with an occasional pompous prelate if we only could produce the other thing as well.

There have always been plenty of honest men and virtuous women and beautiful children in every age, thank God; but there haven't always been big men and there haven't always been great saints. These are worth as long a journey as to the Yellowstone to see.

It is almost a truism to say that when the Church ceased to be big, the Christian world began to be little.

Each sect, being a fraction of the whole, attracted to leadership men who were proper fractions.

For a sect is a segment of the whole, and the whole is greater than any of its parts.

But the principle of subdivision went on indefinitely until the sects became smaller and smaller, and men's vision grew pettier and pettier.

The grace of God became confined to a small section of the civilized world, or the truth of God to a small segment of the whole truth; and the Church which had been hated, usually by wicked men, because it was big and powerful, now came to be despised, often by decent men, because it was small and petty.

This process of devolution has continued until the spirit of the sect has become the spirit of the insect, and the world is filled with small folks, who buzz and bite and poison; they infuriate large mammals and destroy the charms of a peaceful valley.

Formerly Church leaders went out valiantly to battle with lions. Now one hesitates to assume leadership in either Church or state because these bands of insects buzz around the head of the vulnerable hunter.

And many a man will go out against large game who is powerless to protect himself against clans of insects.

A big hunter told me once that he would like to visit the headwaters of the Amazon, but he couldn't put up with the chiggers, for they had invalidated him on a previous trip for several years.

The situation reminds me of an anecdote of Sam Jones:

He had gone to hold a revival in a large Canadian city, but the revival lacked pep. He could not account for the failure of the thing to go until he discovered that certain local leaders had spread the information that Sam smoked, and because of this foible in his character, they refused to be charmed by his eloquence. Whereupon, Sam told the following fable at the next revival meeting:

"Once upon a time, as a traveler in the far west approached a certain village, he met several big bears carrying little children off to their dens. He was intensely excited, and when he arrived at the

village, was met by the fathers of the children, just returning from a squirrel hunt. Whereupon, he berated them roundly for their callous indifference to the loss of their children. Their reply was that they would like to go and kill the bears, but unfortunately the only weapons which they possessed were squirrel guns, so they must content themselves with shooting squirrels, while the bears continued their depredations."

"These villagers," said Mr. Jones, "are like the leaders in this revival. You have nothing bigger than squirrel guns, so you go out to shoot my peccadilloes, while the children of the city are being carried off to dens of vice."

The political and religious atmosphere today is full of swarms of petty people, whose sole claim to virtue consists in their ability to sting the man who is trying to accomplish something.

It ought to be evident to the smallest mind that one cannot produce character in one's self by destroying it in others. The consciousness of our own sins should cause us to be charitable toward the faults of others, and to be kind and helpful to sinners.

When Christians forget to be kindly they cease to fulfill the law of Christ.

But when people become petty they cease to be kindly.

Malicious assertions about men who are trying to do big things is the order of the day, and it is based upon a failure to grasp the bigness of Christ's gos-

pel, which was not so much concerned with the faults of the sinner as it was with the kindness of the saint.

The Pharisee who posed as a pious man was lacking in that very thing. The Christian world lacks it today. It lacks the grace of charity and it lacks it because charity can be developed only in a large room and the Christian body is cut up into small compartments.

The sect spirit makes for zeal and destroys charity.
The mosquito is zealous, but most pestiferous.

The Big and Little in Religion

RELIGION is really a big thing, but when a little mind is confronted with a big thing, it bites off only a small chunk of the whole, and that which was a big thing goes on its way, while the morsel becomes the big thing to the little mind.

Religion has much to do with various things. It is infinite in its diversity.

It has been the motive power for many things. It has promoted education, philanthropy, social service, lodges, cults, philosophies and other movements.

It has concerned itself with prophecy, healing, spirit rapping, telepathy, and other wonders. In the hands of Mohammedans it has sanctified many wives and much slaughter, and in the hands of the Mormon many wives and much business sagacity.

The man who is self-seeking can invoke religion to gratify his lust, slay his enemies, fill his pocket or cure his ills.

The man who lives in an academic world can give a philosophic turn to his religion or a religious turn to his philosophy, and so discover a new religion.

The man who does big business can invoke religion to protect his dividends and the man who works by the day can curse religion because it does not increase his wages.

Religion is elemental. It is like air and fire and water. With these elements one can sail his craft into the harbor where he would be, and with the

same elements he can destroy his ship and be engulfed in the very element by which he plies his trade.

The man who is prosperous can use religion to embalm his conscience and the man who is down on his luck can secure religious charms with which to dispel his misfortune.

The man who is well can ignore religion so long as he has a good appetite, and the man who is ill can become religious to aid his digestion.

Yet religion is the same potent, kindly force which Christ sanctified. It still has force to make us friends with God; to replace hatred for personal enemies with love for those who have despitefully used us; and to inspire sinners with a longing to be clean.

Like fire, it has power to illuminate the understanding; enkindle the affections; energize the will, and burn out the dross.

Like fire, it may also derange the mind; consume love; scotch the will and burn up the most valuable of our possessions.

Like fire, it must be watched, confined, guided, directed, and it will warm men into friendliness and contentment; but like fire it may become a devastating conflagration, destroying the valuables of life as well as its refuse.

Religion has made men saints and hypocrites; has lit the fires of hospitality and the inquisition; has built up Jerusalem and devastated Smyrna. It has produced Christ and Judas; St. Francis and Torquemada; Allenby and Kaiser Wilhelm. In other words, religion is a force which, like all other forces, man

may use for his development or for his destruction; for his redemption or for his judgment.

The mother who has seen her child scorched by fire loves not the fire; but the cold, hungry, lonesome traveler loves a fire-place.

After all, things ought never to be condemned because of our own personal experience, but rather on the broader ground of their benevolent purpose.

So a man should not condemn religion because he has been swindled by a hypocrite, but rather should praise religion because it has given a Christ to the world.

It is only thus that we can find the way that leadeth to eternal life.

The world is full of many ills and many blessings. You may dwell on its wrongs or its blessing and you yourself will become darkness or light to those who look to you for blessing and find in you what you have found in the world.

Elemental things are realities, but they do not change their nature to suit our moods.

God gives us a force in religion and we seem to think we can treat it merely as a sentiment.

The average man dislikes to think and loves to feel.

We want thrills, impressions, emotions, and so we frequent the movies, sing jazz songs, and give bizarre entertainments.

Those who have the money to spend seek to find satisfaction in creating the impression that they are prosperous, while they are grumbling at the size of their bills and the lack of satisfaction that they get out of life. Prosperous people, therefore, grow *blase*,

stodgy, dull, because they foolishly think that joy can be purchased with money.

A little soul cannot be a big man because it has the temporary power of spending much money, nor can such a soul expect to experience big things after the money has been spent.

In the same way the bigness of religion is limited by the size of the soul that comes in contact with it.

As we have intimated, it usually takes a bite, gets an impression and runs eagerly away with the morsel, thinking that it has captured the prize.

Religion can make men big, but it also can make them petty; and when one has persuaded himself that "the sky is falling" because he has been hit by a raindrop, he has helped to make religion ridiculous.

Let us endeavor to study the dimensions of Christ and then bring our own life into comparison with those dimensions.

We may fail to do much, but that which we attempt will be on a scale commensurate with the Gospel. It will at least make us humble instead of making us petty. There is a great difference.

The Mean and Generous in Religion

THERE is nothing more tragic in life than to have a mean little man in a place of big opportunities. It is much better for all concerned to have a big wicked man in such a place.

The spiritual interests of this country have suffered more from the meanness of Christians than from the wickedness of sinners.

For a mean Christian not only fails to let his own light shine, but he so misrepresents Christ to those without that he alienates the sinner with a big heart from the household of faith. If Christians are like that he will have none of it. This tendency to meanness is, I am afraid, one of the temptations of religious people.

They become attached to Christ because they want to save their own souls and this seems to beget in them a saving disposition.

They want to save everything else besides their souls.

These economical Christians remind me of the man who was so saving that he declined to give anything to the Church at all. He based his abstinence from giving on the ground that it did not cost the thief on the cross anything and he was assured of Paradise.

"The difference between you and the thief on the cross," said the indignant solicitor, "is that he was a dying thief and you are a living one."

The thief on the cross had nothing to give and the Lord accepted nothing.

The poor widow who gave her mite gave little in the aggregate but the Lord gave her unlimited credit in Heaven. The rich man clothed in purple and fine linen had much but he did with it as he chose and he woke up in absolute destitution.

Judas tried to use our Lord for business purposes and he finally went out and hanged himself, and there wasn't much to hang when he did it.

As I was writing this on the train, I overheard a Mexican in overalls delivering his philosophy to the Newsboy.

He said in his broken accent, which I will not attempt to repeat:

"In my life I have sometimes been bad and I have sometimes been good, but the only way to live is to keep on trying to be good—it is the only way in which you can win out.

"If a man wants to live to make money, he can make money, but he was born without any clothes and when he dies he takes no more with him than he had when he was born. He cannot win out unless he tries to do right."

Truly one hears wisdom from unexpected sources. It was only the other day on another train, that a young man who is a country school teacher said to me: "The mistake in our educational system in America is that a boy has a head, a hand and a heart, and the boy's hearts gets too little attention."

I wish some of the professors in our great universities could sit at this country boy's feet; they would learn something that they hitherto have missed.

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To train a man's head and hand without training his heart is to train a mean man, in most instances.

What is meanness? It would seem to have been derived etymologically from the word "me," and to describe the spiritual conviction of those who gave a selfish interpretation to the first commandment which might be paraphrased to read: "I will not have any other God but *me*," and in this sense they worship the Lord their God with all their heart and soul and mind, and because their God is a very little God, they come out of the game of life with a very little heart and a very little mind and a very little soul.

For no man who worships himself can ever grow to be any bigger than himself.

Now many a man who thinks he is a Christian is really ignoring Christ in this world with a vague sort of hope that Christ will reward him in the next. I am sure that Christ will reward him just as he deserves.

But all meanness is not money-meanness. That is perhaps the most evident and also the most sordid. A stingy Christian is such an evident hoax.

If we are a petty person, then we will have mean opinions about God and our God will be as meanly opinionated as we are.

It is a strange contradiction of terms but it is not infrequent to find mean persons who will be prodigal in financing a mean religion.

The difficulty in the average community is to find enough generous people to support a generous religion.

Some narrow partisan will give money profusely to propagate a religion which justifies his own pettiness and helps to belittle the big generous vision of the Lord Jesus.

That is one of the greatest troubles in America. Mean people have appropriated the gospel of Christ and are using it for the purpose of propagating a religion that might have been put forth by the Pharisees themselves.

And these evangelists of religious meanness are as bitter and intolerant of anyone who dares to differ with their petty principles as ever were the Pharisees when Christ broke their Sabbath day by rubbing wheat in his hands as he passed through a field of grain.

There are those who feel that unless the Church is achieving numerical results we are wasting money in helping to finance it. In this particular religion is like art. The success of the Church in any community is directly in proportion to the proportion of people who abhor meanness, especially in themselves. This reduces the available material in some very prosperous communities to a very small ratio.

There are plenty of petty religions in the field to satisfy the people of little vision. And if they can satisfy their own meanness why seek further?

The Church has a difficult task, especially in the smaller towns and villages to compete with those religions which are content to send men of small caliber to be prophets to little souls. These petty prophets frequently have great success where a true

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prophet having a real message would receive a prophet's reward.

Christ ever sought out generous souls and when He found them, He rejoiced greatly even if they were Samaritans or sinners.

There must be generous natures for Christ to find satisfactory disciples.

It is the epidemic of petty selfishness which is to be found today in high places which makes it so hard to secure a decent world.

As one studies the leading figures in English and American politics and compares them with the statesmen of the past, one is forced to admit that their personal morals are much better but their political visions are much smaller than their predecessors. One despairs of men who trim down every issue to its political assets. In my judgment, it was petty politicians who produced the war.

When we put a pious two by four in a position of responsibility he is sure to break under the strain.

The little man in a big place is always sure to have two reactions. He is tremendously impressed with his own importance and he is very uncomfortable if his assistants know more than he does.

The Master had a great vision and there have been eras in which men have caught something of it, but as a rule men have been too little rather than too wicked to accept it.

"That ye may be able to comprehend," was the prayer of St. Paul, for if men are not able to comprehend the dimensions of Christ, they will never strive to attain the measure of His stature. We live in a

society which is obsessed with the value of petty morals but is oblivious to the fact that Christ was a prophet of big dimensions.

I am more than satisfied that the message of this Church is good enough for us—I am not sure that we are big enough for it.

We prefer some little society in which the village barber can become an imperial potentate and the undertaker can be an exalted ruler. And we fancy that we are a democratic country and a Christian one.

Not that anyone objects to these or any other respectable citizen amusing themselves with these titles of the past, but the horror is that they should seriously regard it as a worthy substitute for the religion of Jesus Christ.

The Lord of Flies

IT IS atmosphere that really makes the Church or the home. It is this atmosphere which children breathe into their subconscious selves and and it comes out in their ultimate character.

Now the sins of the home and the Church are not apt to be flagrant sins but rather an innumerable company of petty sins which poison the contentment that might otherwise abide there.

We do not expect to find lions or tigers in the home but we are used to gnats and flies which can be very irritating, although not so immediately fatal as the larger beasts.

It must have been someone with a saving sense of humor who called the devil Beelzebub, which means "Lord of flies."

That is just the role he takes when he enters the home and you can hear the buzzing of his innumerable satellites as father complains about the multitude of bills, and mother about the scarcity of comforts, and brother about his inconvenient chores, and sister about her dilapidated clothes.

Satan has entered in, contentment has gone out and the flies settle down industriously at their task of disturbing peace and defiling the white linen of righteousness.

I know excellent parents who really love their children and want them to grow up to be good men and women who are serenely unconscious that flies are sources of fatal infection.

To sit during one's youth at meals where members of the community are discussed and neighbors criticized; to participate in the buzzing murmurs of various members of the family about various complaints; to nag and to be nagged at sundry and various times is to grow up in an atmosphere of envy, malice and all uncharitableness.

What is needed in such homes is to put on screens which will keep out noxious insects, or in other word to keep a watch on the door of the tongue.

Moreover, it is a significant fact that will bear meditation, if one considers that those who criticize others most are not those who are the most virtuous themselves.

People who do not lift their finger to help any one else will complain bitterly that they themselves are being neglected.

How often have I been told by some injured soul that they have been in the parish for so many years and no one has called on them. And when I have said in reply, "That's so, you have been in the parish a long time, how many newcomers have you called on?" they not only look surprised but injured.

It is frequently the case that people who are quick to detect sin in others, are expert because they are so familiar with that same sin in themselves.

There is a sign one sees occasionally, "Watch your step!" when there is a pitfall to be avoided.

I never did like mottoes but there is one that might be hung over the door of our homes, "Watch your tongue!"

Another form of this disease which destroys con-

tentment is the habit that so many have of criticizing the Church as though it were something foreign to themselves in which they have no corporate responsibility.

"The Church does this or doesn't do that." "They fail to do this or they fail to do that."

The impersonal pronoun of responsibility is the alibi of irresponsible folk.

Doing little or nothing themselves they fault the failure of those who are at least trying to do something.

I have seldom heard those who were really working hard for the Church, indulge in those accusations. They love the Church too well to criticize.

Nor is it those who are giving largely. It is the shirker and the evader who talk to create an alibi.

After all it is the habit of murmuring which is self-intoxicating.

It is like rheumatic pain. It shows an accumulation of spiritual infection somewhere in the system.

Better have an X-ray to locate the pus-pocket.

What the critic needs is not painful words but self-examination and confession.

The root of bitterness is not in the object of their criticism but in themselves.

If they will purify their own spiritual system, they will be peace-makers and not disturbers of the peace.

If they would say more prayers for their neighbors and themselves, they would use their tongues to better advantage than they do in their floods of criticism.

I do not know what Heaven is but I am sure it is not a large place where critics abound and where murmuring is tolerated.

And especially it is not a place where the same individual is judge and prosecuting attorney.

I am very sure of one thing, and that is—God never intended a man to judge his neighbor when his own interests are involved.

If you are the plaintiff or the defendant you cannot also be the judge and render the verdict.

But that is what murmurers claim.

I have been injured or insulted. My neighbor is a sinner.

I am the judge. The verdict is that they shall be banished from my presence henceforth.

Silly! All you do is to deceive your self into thinking that your *ex parte* judgment is a valid decision. It will be ruled out of court on the ground of prejudice.

It is true that there are many disagreeable people in the world.

Just remember that you are one of them, and that is why you are to forgive others as you hope to be forgiven; and if you insist that those who owe you a few pence shall pay you to the last farthing, then don't be surprised if your big debt to God is running into the millions.

He has told us plainly that He will not forgive unless we do; that He will not bless us unless we bless others; that if we insist on complaining, we will have some real cause for complaint before we are through.

After all, we are either instruments of grace or else stumbling blocks.

And we do not discharge our duty to God by complaining about His Church and we do not absolve ourselves from condemnation by being expert in our criticism of others.

Murmur not but give praise, for so you will do your share in witnessing Christ to men.

The Two Per Cents

LET us study the law of averages for a few minutes; it may help us to solve the problem of life. Let us suppose that there are one hundred million humans in the United States. That is a lot of people. But the Creator has always been prodigal of quantity.

He has made so many planets that the mind of man cannot count them. What then is a mere planet to the Creator? It is no more than a nickel is to a millionaire. On one of these planets which we call the world, He has manufactured things of innumerable kinds in such proportion that figures would cease to mean anything if they were counted.

Among these countless things he has made men, and made them by the billion, of all colors, shapes and fashions. You and I are each one of these insignificant creatures, so insignificant that if you were to express the insignificance by a fraction, it would

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look something like this $\frac{1}{500,000,000,000}$ which to say the least isn't much to get excited over.

You can dress up this numerator in silks or uniforms, or you can clothe it in rags and it doesn't materially affect the terms of the fraction.

Perhaps the marvel is simply this—that there should be so many of these minute atoms and that I should be one of them.

Viewed merely as things, the universe has about

as much cohesion as the catalogue of a mail-order house.

It is inconceivable that the mind which could create such an enormous quantity of multitudinous things should have had no moral purpose in it all.

This would be to imply that the Creator is a talented lunatic which is also inconceivable.

True it is, that there are certain of these innumerable numerators who tell you with a profound pity for your invincible ignorance that they are searching for the purpose of it all, by finding the origin of it all.

Personally, I am exceedingly dumb, I admit it. I don't see for the life of me, how we are going to answer the question, "What for?" by solving the question, "Where from?"

Supposing that we all started from a monkey, a clam or a pumpikn seed; that doesn't throw any light upon our destiny.

Let us suppose that the Creator has an appreciation for quality as well as for quantity.

There are reasons for supposing that this has something to do with the problem.

Let us take the simple art of making money. Ninety-eight per cent of the wealth of this country, if it came to a show down, is controlled by about two per cent of the population.

If that two per cent should die tomorrow and take their wealth with them to Heaven, or elsewhere, the United States would become an enormous poor farm.

Something like that happened in Russia. All the wealth in Russia was either impounded or dispersed

by a little group of self-constituted financiers, and people find that there is mighty little to eat. Of course the theory is the other way. Most theories are, but theorists are poor cooks as a rule.

The ninety-eight per cent have an idea that if somehow they could sandbag the two per cent, then the desert would blossom as the rose. Nothing like it.

We could have another two per cent, a little less intelligent and far less bountiful than the present two per cent.

That is a law of averages which is as accurate as the mortality tables of an insurance company.

You can legislate away the tables, but you will forfeit your insurance when your family needs it.

Moreover it is not an accident that the two per cent who control the money should be the same two per cent, roughly speaking, who set the pace in society; so-called because it isn't very sociable. In the first place they have the money to pay the bills of social vanity, and in the second place they actually have what most of the 98 per cent want, and so they have the respect of desire. They are as much of an American nobility as money can make for that which is noble. Society is dull, not because it needs to be dull, but because people who are financially sharp are apt to be dull along other lines,—not individually of course, but the heavier the millionaire the more weight he carries.

Now there is another two per cent to consider. Possibly there are two million people in the United States who really think.

Civilization is that state of society in which each man does one thing and hires the rest done for him.

This is as true of thinking as it is of shoe-making. As one person has well put it, the rest do not think, they merely think that they are thinking and some others refuse to think at all.

Sheep do not think. Others think for them and pull the wool over their eyes, and it is just as well that they do, for otherwise the sheep would either lose both the wool and the eyes, or else go off and live in some isolated mountains, where nobody else could live or wanted to.

As long as sheep herd in green pastures they require shepherds, which same is much harder on the shepherd than on the sheep; for while the sheep live they have plenty to eat and grow fat, but the shepherd is apt to grow crazy.

Of course this isn't complimentary to the human race and it irritates those who advocate the rights of man. I am not advocating it as a program; merely calling attention to it as the law of averages.

Now do not think that these thinking shepherds get the wool.

No! the wool goes to those who own the sheep. The shepherds get a salary as a rule. I was told the other day by a man whose knowledge of finance is profound, (mine is not—I have never had the chance to develop it); that most wealthy men owe their wealth to the intelligence of their subordinates. That is what he called them, not I.

In other words the two two per cent classes do not

necessarily consist of the same persons. Then there is another two per cent of American humans who are virtuous.

I do not mean those whose virtues require the lime-light. I mean those who practice virtue because they have to live with themselves and prefer to move in decent society.

Or perhaps better, those who love Jesus Christ, have a profound impression that He knows what is in man, and are desirous that He find nothing in them that He would refuse to associate with.

This particular two per cent is handicapped by the fact that it is forbidden by the Master to advertize. This is a great handicap in our very commercialized civilization.

Such a handicap that many people, who are otherwise virtuous, cannot resist proclaiming the fact and thereby subject their virtues to a hardening process.

For virtue is very like one's hands, easily calloused. A callous is tender only when touched; it is not tender to those who grasp it. Honorable perhaps but hard.

And so we might ramble on with our two per cents. There are these in art, music, baseball, pugilism, handling horses, playing politics, doing the work of the Church, practicing medicine or patriotism. About two per cent in each class.

Now what has all this to do with God's world?

Much the same as it has to do with a college education. Here too we have great quantities of young men who shine socially, athletically, lethargically, but the

college couldn't justify its existence if it wasn't for the two per cent who study.

I am inclined to think that you will find God's reason for the world, not in some antique protoplasm from which it starts, but rather in the two per cent (if that is the percentage) who seek God's purpose and find it. Whether you care to belong to this particular two per cent will depend upon your treasure, for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

This two per cent Isaiah calls "the remnant" and the Master refers to it when he says "few there be that find it."

We are a quantitative people. We love to have the biggest Church, or theater, or population or bank deposits of any city in the world. That completes our happiness.

But I fancy God isn't interested in our bigness.

It is not the bigness of the mountain but the purity of the gem which the mountain conceals that delights the Creator.

Mere obesity isn't a virtue.

Mere quantity of things cannot make a mean man anything but a mean man.

If you really want to change this fraction, don't fuss much with the numerator. That will remain about as it is.

Seek a smaller denominator and you will have a much larger fraction.

Better be numbered with the qualitative few than with the quantitative multitude.

It is your denominator that really tells into how many parts the whole is divided.

It is hopeless to change the numerator into a super-one. Better seek that division into parts which appeals to your imagination and then put yourself bravely on that foundation.

The Joyousness of Living

DISCIPLESHIP of our Lord is more an attitude of heart and mind than it is either a state of respectability or a record of achievement.

We must take God's own method of revealing Himself to us if we would thoroughly test this.

It is as though a man of great position and wealth wished to test the loyalty of his friends, and so, clothing himself in poverty and throwing around himself the cloak of seeming failure, he goes to his onetime friends for their help and comfort.

In reality he is as prosperous as ever, but he seems to be insolvent that he may test all those professions of friendship which he has received in the high estate which he has attained.

He even allows himself to become an object of ridicule and contempt and does many things which are not the way in which they are done in the best circles.

He puts on the livery of poverty and walks in ways that seem eccentric and permits diverse humiliations to be heaped upon him.

Surely he separates those who love him from those who use him, and those who will suffer with him from those who merely would prosper with him.

So Christ tested humanity down to the last man—He tried out the twelve who had been with Him when He was loved and admired of men because of His mighty works, and He permitted them to deny

Him and to desert Him when He reached the bottom of His humiliation.

He scaled His friends down to St. John and the Marys and then received back St. Peter with the words that must have revived sad memories—"Simon, lovest thou me?"

I think it is fair to say that our Christian fellowship is more an attitude of the heart and mind than a matter of respectability and achievement.

Neither the beggar at the rich man's gate, nor the fallen woman in Simon's doorway, nor she who gave the two farthings, nor he who was crucified beside Him could boast much of either respectability or achievement, but they were all forgiven much, because they loved much.

And the measure of their love was that none of these were ashamed of that love when others derided it.

Love is something which will not bear statistical investigation and cannot be recorded in a parochial year book.

It is not necessarily associated with culture, morals or orthodoxy.

It is the attitude of heart and mind which causes a human soul to count all else but loss.

It is a force that can constrain the outcast and the criminal to climb mountains of transfiguration reckless of privations.

It is a force that is true to Christ when all others fall away and hangs on to the cross even when the power of God seemingly has failed.

It has been the most persistent, aggressive motive that has ever stimulated men to spread the gospel of human kindness.

It is the one thing needful in our personal contact to make the religion of Christ an irresistible influence in society.

His power wanes and waxes strong just in proportion as He can command that kind of love which is faithful in all things; which is more concerned that Christ may be glorified than it is that the individual himself may be praised of men.

This quality which St. Paul calls the Love of Christ may be possessed by any one who will persistently seek it and, when once acquired, will admit the possessor into the very best society that graces the Courts of Heaven; will endow him with the only riches which are imperishable and will enthuse him with a joy that no man can deprive him of.

It is a rare quality because few there be that seek it, and yet one has to glance at any one who has attained it to realize that he has found a treasure from which he would not and cannot be separated.

It is apparent to all men who look at the faces of those who have attended material success that they do not know joy, for who would look for joy in the directors of a large corporation or in the frequenters of social conventions.

Their faces betray the fact that they have not found what they sought; nay, rather that they have lost what as children they once possessed.

Joy is not found as a rule in the homes of those who have amassed wealth even though they are sur-

rounded with every conceivable material comfort, but joy can be found by any pastor in the homes where Christ is much beloved, and it is a joy that no man taketh from them.

Many people tell me that they get no joy in their religion when it is apparent that they have missed the source of joy.

If you will question them further you will find that Christ is not a living reality, a real person who can hear their prayers.

But surely if the human voice can carry from New York to Chicago by radio, the Son of God has no difficulty in hearing our prayers.

And if we are really seeking the Love of Christ we will not confuse prayer with teasing God for something.

Permit me to suggest that at least three times a day you will use some such prayer as this:

O Christ! I believe in Thee because Thou art so true!

O Christ! I hope in Thee because Thou art so good!

O Christ! I love Thee, because Thou art so kind!

O Christ! I am sorry that I have been unworthy of Thy love for me!

Inject into your religion, that which Christ brought into the world—the possibility of personal converse between God and man.

Make Christ's presence in your life such a reality that when you are thinking a wrong thought or

harboring a mean sentiment, you are at once conscious that He sees you.

Make His presence so real that when you fall into sin and do that which grieves Him, you are as conscious of our Lord's pained look as was St. Peter beside the fire.

Practice the presence of Christ at each Eucharist so that His promise to dwell in you may be the most real thing in your life that day.

We all must be profoundly conscious of our unworthiness the moment that the beauty of His holiness becomes the greatest reality in our lives.

Then we find our joy in serving Him—in feeling that perhaps He may approve.

Then we find our help in feeling that He is near to care, to understand, to help.

Then we find the world, not a dreary thing ending in a cemetery but a wondrously beautiful thing ending in the fellowship of Jesus Christ.

No morals, no orthodoxy, no culture, can take the place of our personal sense of the presence of Jesus Christ in our lives.

PART II

THE SOCIAL GOSPEL

An Oriental Indictment

GHANDI is a religious enthusiast who is the Savanarola of India. A graduate of Oxford, a lawyer who has amassed a large fortune, he lives most simply and devotes his life to resisting the encroachments of Western Industrialism upon the ancient culture of the Indes.

In a lecture delivered recently, I heard the Dean of English Language at Bombay University state that Ghandi was originally very strongly pro-English, but that recent events in European diplomacy and post-bellum politics had driven him to a strong opposition to the supremacy of Western culture in India.

Ghandi is not a Christian, but is a great admirer of Christ. He believes that the Sermon on the Mount is the best compendium of moral truth and is calculated to bring the greatest happiness to the greatest number; but he also believes that the Gospel of Christ has been made inoperative by the crass obstinacy of the Western mind.

"Why," asks Ghandi, "should we seek to become a product of the Western industrial program, when the European thinks of himself chiefly as a body (only incidentally as a soul); whereas the ancient Hindu of high caste thinks of himself as a soul temporarily inhabiting a body."

After all, isn't this indictment of Anglo-Saxon civilization by this learned Hindu one which makes us wince just because it is true?

When one thinks of leaders in England and America one does not think of them at all as men who have accommodated their lives to God's will; but, quite the contrary, as men who are trying to accommodate God's will to their own plans.

These plans seem big to those who execute them,—so big that their material bulk dwarfs a human soul.

In this they differ from their Master, for He never had a plan so big that it shut Him off from the appeal of the least of these, His brethren.

Any man, the magnitude of whose business has made him indifferent to the cry of human need, may be a big brute; He is not a big man.

He may be a well-groomed and well-fed brute, but he is the kind of whom Ghandi truthfully says is chiefly body and incidentally a soul.

There has probably never been a more brutal system than that of Western industrialism in its effect on all of those involved.

When a man leaves out of his daily life those touches of recollection by which he shows himself to be a child of God, he certainly lacks something which would take him out of the brute class.

Unless one keeps up his morning and evening devotions; his grace at meals; his hour of meditation in private as well as his hour of worship in public as the regular habit of his weekly life; there is nothing in his life to relate him to God.

He becomes chiefly a body to be clothed and kept and his soul becomes so incidental as to become a negligible factor in his life.

The fact that pagans are well dressed and well mannered cannot excuse them from the indictment of this cultivated Hindu as he flays our Western industrialism for its lack of spirituality and for its ultra care of material interests.

It is certainly a narrow way which one has to pursue in seeking spiritual culture, but no man is excused from the attempt by the difficulty of the quest.

On the one side is the cant of the double-faced hypocrite, who talks piously and acts maliciously.

On the other side is the mechanical goose-step of a perfunctory ecclesiastical regimentation. In neither of these perversions of Christian culture do we find those qualities of earnest reverence, of courteous charity and of courageous self-discipline which should characterize the followers of Jesus Christ.

That the representative of Western culture so often leaves the exploitation of religion to those who pervert it is no credit to his courage, to his culture or to his character.

There is no question but that God expects man to cultivate the soul, irrespective of those who pretend and those who fail, and it is no alibi for relegating one's spiritual development to the background, that one is ashamed of his fellow-men.

There is a demand today for men who put the soul and its possibilities before the body and its easier victories, and except it be possible to secure such men then the time will come that America will be like Sodom and Gomorrha.

The man who neglects God and refuses to cultivate his spiritual nature is confessing to the world that he is chiefly a body and only incidentally a soul.

And such men can never aid in the solution of the moral and spiritual problems that face our civilization.

A Social Gospel

THE WORD "social" and the word "society" have the same parentage; they are both derived from the Latin word *socius*, which means a companion. Yet the two words are just like two branches of the same family—the one branch seeking virtue and the other branch seeking prosperity.

They are like the two ladies who were said to have lived upon the same square, but not in the same circle with one another.

Christ preached a social gospel and by this is meant that He came to found a household of faith in which rich and poor meet together and acknowledge one Father; in which there is no respect of persons but master and servant meet at a common table and profess a common brotherhood; in which the learned are not arrogant and the ignorant are not bitter; in which the opulent are not vain and the poor are not envious; in which the cultivated are extremely courteous to the masses and the common-folk are gladly respectful to those in authority.

No one can read the Gospel of Christ, or the words of St. Paul, or the history of the early Church without realizing that the strength of the Gospel was the sincerity of the fellowship between all sorts of folks; just as it was in the trenches during the war.

But the "Social Gospel" has a brother which resembles him in many ways, but yet is most unlike him in other respects.

So much do the two look alike that many people cannot tell them apart and yet they are very different at heart.

This brother we may call the "Society Gospel." He too starts in the fellowship of Christ and seemingly carries out the will of the Master with equal earnestness, but he is really a rather unholy fellow.

He accepts the fellowship of the Gospel with certain reservations.

Instead of saying, "Father, what wilt Thou have me to do?" and then setting out to do it at any cost; the Society Gospel hedges and says, "Father, what wilt Thou do for me?"

Instead of saying, "What can I do for the least of these my brethren in order that they who have never had much, may have something that I can give them?" the Society Gospel says, "What can I do for those who are beneath me without identifying myself too closely with them?"

Instead of saying "What can I give up in a worldly way that I may be an influence for good in spiritual things?" the Society Gospel says, "How can I do some spiritual work without affecting my social standing?"

I have watched the game for many years both from the standpoint of the poor missionary and from the seats of the mighty, and I have come to the conclusion that it is much easier to convert people to an option on the Kingdom of Heaven than it is to get them to invest in the fellowship of the humble. Not that this high mightiness manifests itself in the crude and rather stupid way that one sees depicted

in the movies, but in a far more subtle and genteel way so that it can deceive even the very elect.

One doesn't find Christians with that haughty arrogance which is so offensive to God and man; but rather with a cultivated aloofness which charms you with its gracious manner, while it freezes you with its distant frigidity.

It is Christian in that it is willing to give light, but pagan in its inability to provide heat.

Its love is platonic and is far more interested in some theory of universal brotherhood than it is in the practice of a more localized humanity.

It believes thoroughly in a community chest as the least bothersome way of feeding Lazarus. It is not indifferent to Lazarus' sores but rather calloused as to his blood relationship.

When the Christian religion began, it sprang from the soil; not from palaces or academies. Its first protagonists were peasants; its early adherents were mostly poor people. There were not many rich, not many powerful in those early days.

Until Constantine gave it imperial sanction, it was singularly free from social climbers. Then the constituency rapidly changed and the Church became the home of academic learning and social culture.

The humble drifted into sects where they ceased to be meek; or the meek endured a situation in which they were forced to be humble.

Certainly one does not wish to exclude learning and culture from the courts of the Lord's House, but one can pay too big a price for these embellish-

ments, for there are more basic virtues which they must not replace but adorn.

There is nothing more delightful than men who are learned gentlemen and also humble Christians, but the Church has suffered from those who have felt that it was enough to be the one without concerning themselves much as to whether they were attempting to be the other.

One can never quite get away from those verses in the song of the Blessed Virgin, when she exultingly sings of the time when God shall exalt the humble and the meek and send the haughty empty away.

The words have to me a very real meaning and I rather fancy that Europe would be a joyous place today, if prelates and princes had spent more time on the significance of these words and less on the pomps and vanities of their respective official positions.

Arrogance in Christians of high estate has made envy, malice and all uncharitableness among the rank and file.

But we are not so much concerned with the pomp of popes as we are with the dispositions of bishops, priests and deacons; and less with the pride of kings than with the self-conceit of wardens and vestrymen.

They just don't seem to learn how to become the friend of publicans and sinners as the Master was and would have us be; nor do they seem to take in the tremendous spiritual importance of the prayers of the poor.

I know that it is as difficult a task for the cul-

tured and prosperous to be humanly considerate of the uncouth and improvident, as it is for the uncouth to learn manners and the improvident to learn thrift.

It is well for us to recollect that this is a world in which a shepherd boy became the great King of Israel, and a ploughboy the great poet of Scotland, and a rail-splitter the great President of our Republic, and a carpenter the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

It would seem, not only un-Christian but also unintelligent, not to appreciate the latent value of the common people, and to realize that the world owes more to cots and cabins than it does to mansions and palaces.

"The Cotter's Saturday Night" is a truer exposition of the dignity of human life than is the "Soul of a Bishop" from one who never was a Bishop and has somewhat of an indefinite soul. It is this one touch that is lacking both in our ministry and in our laity—we have permitted ourselves to be artificially removed from the tang of the moor which produces the delicate odor of violets and hether and are too prone to revel in the rather sickening odor of hot-house neurotics.

The Church of England lacked this saving graciousness toward the lowly when it forced the Wesleyans out of its Communion and caused them to lose the one thing which the members of the Mother Church lacked, viz.—humility and meekness.

For humility is not identical with poverty nor is meekness lacking among the prosperous.

In fact, a cross section of human society would

show that humility and meekness are not necessarily related to worldly prosperity or the lack of it.

The pity of it is that the Church has never seemed to appreciate these qualities in her own constituency.

Possibly it is the hardest lesson which Churchmen have to learn that the Church of the Nazarene does not fulfill its function by providing its members with a pleasant atmosphere of learning and culture.

Learning and culture are rather a by-product of Christian influence than its basic output. An arrogant bishop, a smug rector, a worldly vestryman are offensive to the ethics of Christ's Gospel, however acceptable they may be to a little coterie of constituents who applaud them.

The test is not one, however, of external manners but of an internal attitude, a basic disposition. Perhaps the test which a Christian man ought constantly to apply to himself are these:

Do I really worship God or do I try to refashion Him to suit my temporal condition?

Is my attitude toward the least of these my brethren that of the Christ or of the Pharisees?

Am I more impressed with my own sense of rectitude or my consciousness that I am an unprofitable servant?

Do I consciously act differently toward those whom I regard as my equals and those whom I regard as social outcasts?

Am I satisfied to move in a little clique of attractive people or do I really want to know and help those who are unattractive?

In other words, am I a follower of Dives or of

Christ? Is my concern more that of purple and fine linen, of sumptuous fare and congenial friends than of the sores of Lazarus, his loneliness and his unattractiveness?

As Vice-President Marshall has very happily put it in analyzing our modern charity: "I am not opposed to scientific charity, but I do not favor the introduction of science to the exclusion of the personal and heart approach."

And so I might say that I am not opposed to a highly educated and cultivated Christian consciousness unless it fails to carry the human touch of Jesus Christ into the personal contact of Christians with publicans and sinners. Any other kind of Christian fellowship is Christianity with Christ left out.

Of course the reason why so few of us are of the kind whom the common people gladly hear is just because it is the hardest job that confronts us.

It is not easy deliberately to forsake that which is congenial in order that we may do that which Christ expects of us, for, after all, the Christian life is a difficult task for, as we have said before, it consists essentially in doing that which we do not want to do and it is loving the person whom we do not like.

Orientation

THE word is derived from the fact that the Sun lies in the East and we look toward the rising Sun as the beginning of the day. The Sun-worshipper faced the rising sun as his first act of worship. Sunday is a word of pagan origin and testifies to this ancient devotion to the Sun. In life we may be said to orientate ourselves, when we determine the prime factor to which we credit the origin of our life. To what do we look for inspiration?

So Christ is the Sun of Righteousness to the Christian and we strive to orientate our life to Christ, as we "with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord."

Religion is primarily concerned with this matter of orientation and a good deal of man's ultimate character is determined by the orientation of his life as the dawn of his day is breaking.

To me, it is a very curious trait of modern thought that it gets so easily irritated over the phenomenon of religion. Irritation is always a sign of mental unbalance. The man who refuses to deal with facts as facts is on the way to the madhouse and religious phenomena are as much fact in human life as is bacteria or logic.

"We believe in God" is such a universal characteristic of man that if you care to take it out of man's

experience, you would have to re-write human history.

And yet, scientific writers have coined a phrase, "nature," which science does not define and talks glibly and unscientifically about nature's doing this or that.

What is nature? A person, a force or a bogey? Nobody knows. In fact the word nature is a synonym for "X" in the equation.

"We believe in the Hereafter" is another human characteristic to which the human race gives universal testimony. To the mere scientist this is "Y" in the equation.

This phenomenon is baffling to the scientific mind. Man is not concerned with the unknown future, but rather is concerned with man's origin.

If we ask the mere scientist what he thinks is the purpose of human life, he smiles in a patronizing way and tells you that science is concerned with the origin of life; but, piffle! If I ask the station master where this train is going to, and he tells me in a dogmatic fashion that my question is foolish because the train will pass out of his sight in a few minutes, but that I should be satisfied to know that this train had its origin in Boston, I may be pardoned if I regard him as mentally unbalanced.

Mankind is anxious to know whither it is going. It may be that no one can answer the question, in which case mankind must feel as irresponsible as a hobo, who boards a train merely because it is going somewhere; but it is a silly answer to man's earnest inquiry to be told science is not concerned with where

you are going but it is on the eve of certain important investigations as to whence you came.

Perhaps I came from an ape or a shell fish, in either of which cases I may be said to carry with me unmistakeable marks of my ancestry, but I submit, even so, I am more concerned with whither I am going than I am to unearth my noble pedigree. In other words it is unquestionably outside the sphere of science to tell me where I am going, but I am not impressed by the sanity of the savant, who tells me that the question is a foolish one, but that it would be wise for me to concern myself with where I came from.

Either question is of course permissible, but if I ask the former question of the science policeman and get snubbed for my folly, I am not going to be any more discouraged than if I ask the religious policeman where I have been and he arrests me as a suspicious character.

There is a class of parents who resent the questions of their children and suppress curiosity as childish folly, but they are stupid parents who are stunting the growth of their children's mentality because they themselves lack sense, or at least imagination.

But no more so than the father of science who answers his child—"No! my child I do not know where you are going. In fact do not concern yourself with such a silly question. I will tell you what I know of where you come from, for all in life which is worth while must be fashioned by the scientific code."

He seems to be like the silly mother who refuses to allow her starving child to enter the bread-line because it is contrary to her social code that her child should receive bread in such fashion.

Of course there is a scientific code and a social code and a political code, but life is too big a thing to be limited by a code. It seeks food in any case and asks questions because it was made that way and acquires character that way and arrives at its destination that way.

I want to know why I am here and where I am going and if science can't answer and society doesn't satisfy my quest, then I am going to ask somebody else because I would be a quitter if I didn't.

Now let's get back to all this code stuff and consider life in its primitive reality.

I know that I am a creature as well as I know anything and if I am a creature, I know that I had someone who created me, never mind the method—and I am pretty sure, looking around the rest of creation, that the Creator had some purpose and that I, like everything else, have some destiny. I ask the mere scientist about my destiny and am told to look into the past, and I shrug my shoulders and say that science is a fog and something of a has been.

I ask the mere business man about my destiny and he tells me to accumulate things, to be practical and to stop my idealism, and I shrug my shoulders and say that judging from those who have made a success in accumulating things, most of them look as though they had lost their last friend or never had

any—I ask them where I am going and they tell me to enjoy the scenery.

I look around for some one to give an intelligent answer to my perfectly legitimate question and I find someone who looks spiritually intelligent. I find a benevolent old man, who differs from the mere scientist and the mere financier in that he looks as though he had some idea of life's purpose.

He is old in years but he has graciousness of character, the enthusiasm of youth and the bearing of a gentleman, and I put my juvenile question to him and he tells me that I am a child of my Father in Heaven and that I am going to a home which He has prepared for me.

The answer has the merit of being reasonable, intelligible to a child and highly satisfactory if only it is true.

This policeman acts as though he was kind and intelligent—qualities that did not impress themselves on my childish mind in the previous encounters.

And so I ask him eagerly to tell me the way to satisfy my search.

This old man tells me that he can direct me to the same guide that is conducting him and that while he himself has not yet reached this home, nor seen this Father, yet thus far the guide has been so satisfactory that he recommends me to follow Him also.

Now if you have ever been in the big woods you know something about guides—

I have seen guides for whom I had such trust that if they had told me that they could conduct me to some strange and beautiful place that I would put

my life unhesitatingly into their hands, and when one entrusts himself to a guide in the big woods, he pretty nearly does that very thing.

Now the qualities in a guide that impress you, are not assurance but confidence; not assertion, but humility; not pretense but simplicity.

And so when this old man directs me to Jesus Christ as my guide in the way of life, he does so not because he has arrived at his destination but because he has learned that his guide never deceives him.

Never promises him an easy way, when it is hard; never boasts of what has been achieved, but presses toward the difficulties ahead; never is brutally indifferent toward the sufferings of the smallest animal, but is ever considerate of all life.

So as the pressure of the question is an imperative one I accept the guidance of the Master and I learn three things that belong to the nature of things—

1st—That I must accept my guide not on His own testimony merely, but because of the works that He has done and teaches me to do.—As I learn His ways I follow more confidently in His footsteps.

2nd—That if I would know His doctrine, I must do as He bids me.

3rd—That in proportion as I learn His way and do His will, I begin to enter the kingdom which He assures me I will ultimately possess; and that as I deviate from His standards and His integrity, I lose that confidence which His presence begets in me.

Now let us go back to our guide. No man is sufficient unto himself, but we all have experienced the joy of personal devotion to a leader.

During our childhood, the greatest joy in life was found in personal devotion to our parents.

In school, it was not the wisest man that helped us most but the teacher to whom we were most devoted.

In the army it was not the ablest captain but the most beloved who inspired us to the highest plane of duty.

This then is life.

Who is your guide?

What Master, if you have one, commands your best loyal devotion?

There are three masters of men who guide their destinies today.

The one is a God as revealed in mechanical force; the next is a God as revealed in personal ambition; the third is God as revealed in Jesus Christ.

Choose then, which one you will serve.

Impotency of Selfishness

THE natural man is as self centered as a savage. Everything revolves around his own interest. He thinks about his opinions, his success, his prowess, his business and his diseases. As a matter of fact he is a drop in the ocean of life, but he will not admit it. He talks about his rights and his injuries but is not keen about his responsibilities and his own sins.

He cultivates certain tastes and life becomes a passion for the gratification of these appetites.

It may be a thirst for whiskey or the love of money or the desire for show.

Whatever it is that obsesses him, he acts as though God had created the world in order that he might gratify his own little soul, and the tragedy of his life is that the more he gets, the more he craves.

Possession cannot keep pace with desire. He worships the creature which he fondly believes will satisfy him and he ends by being the slave of the creature which he worships.

He avoids God for it seems to him as though God, if indeed there is a God, exists to rob him of his heart's desire.

The selfish man is a spoiled child grown to man's estate.

His Heavenly Father delights in setting him tasks to do when he himself knows what task lies before him.

He hasn't time for God because God is always taking the joy out of his life.

The self centered man does not believe that if you seek the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, all those things over which he is anxious, will be added unto him. The self centered man is extremely childish in his attitude toward His Father in Heaven.

Your child comes in and asks for a quarter, or wants to go with certain companions, and you, because you are his father, refuse. You are thinking of his future life about which the child cares not a rap. He wants what he wants, now!

So men grasp for this and grab for that and when it is denied them they curse and rave like a spoiled child, or they grow sullen and unapproachable.

"God gave me these appetites," said a young man, "and he is to blame if I indulge in them."

God gave you certain desires which are perfectly good and you have centered on this or that desire to the exclusion of its counter-balancing control, which God also gave you. Nothing is holier than the love of man for a woman and nothing more lovable than children, yet the perversion of this love, not only has defeated the purpose of the desire, but has changed the child of God into a pervert.

He then blames God for his own selfish perversion of a holy thing.

He has thrown his life out of plum because he is disobedient to God's will for him.

Desire loses its beauty and fastens the bands of its own tyranny upon him.

These men have turned the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator.

Professing themselves to be wise, they become fools and God permits them to reap the results their own self-sufficiency.

But says the rebellious pervert, "God is all powerful and had no right to make me so weak that I could become a fool." The doctrine of God's omnipotence is a curious boomerang.

If we accept the doctrine, then we should never resist His power; and if we do not accept the doctrine, then we have no right to claim it as an alibi.

The omnipotence of God is governed by the omniscience of God and His omniscience has so directed His omnipotence that He wills to have children who love Him by choice.

You so will. You would not have your child grow up to be an automatic reflection of yourself. You deliberately allow him to mingle with the world in order that he may learn to overcome the world.

You would not permit him to grow up in bovine ignorance of evil, even if you had the means to segregate him in a monastic garden of virtue.

The truth is that we want to play the game of life as it is because it is a good game and because it is quite possible to overcome evil with good.

If God's Almighty power is a factor in the game which you admit when you are winning, then it cannot be a factor which you eliminate when you are losing.

The strength of a nation is just as great as the

greatness of its ideals. Great Britain has been a great nation because it has had mighty men who had a vision of empire, and more than any other nation has it had the fear of God.

Don't mistake this statement or confuse the issue. I am not saying that Englishmen have been more virtuous than other peoples. The one is not necessarily a corollary of the other.

Reverence for God like reverence for parents is one thing and it has a tremendous influence on the sons and daughters of its family life.

Personal morals is another thing, equally important, but not at all the same thing. They ought to go together but do not do so necessarily.

National reverence for God and a belief in Divine Providence will cause that nation to have a big vision and to attempt great things, even though individually men do not live up to all that God demands of them.

I do not know that the men who made England and the United States to be great nations, were better men personally than the present leaders of parliament and senate, but I do know that they were bigger men and that their vision of national responsibility was not so petty as it is now.

And I know further that a self centered policy of selfish self-seeking is as dangerous to the future of both nations as red anarchy has been fatal to Russia.

It is impossible for little men to rule adequately a great nation.

Better have leaders who have glaring personal

faults and a big vision than little men of irreproachable habits and petty self-centered policies.

They are the kind of people who crucified Christ once and have crucified His leadership ever since.

I mean the kind of men who prate about duty when we are in danger and then exploit the nation for their own aggrandisemeent when we are at peace.

There is nothing that has so nauseated me in our national history as that big booming voice that proclaimed to American youth the necessity of their sacrifice during the war; which has in both England and America trailed off into a whine about taxes and a policy of national isolation. Who is so small that he cannot see that national isolation is a policy of small potatoes from every angle.

If Europe needed England and America then, it needs it far more now, for it is desperately ill.

If this be true then my son and yours went into the war, not for high-sounding principles which resounded then, but for the small-minded policies which are prevailing now.

It is a sad thing that when we need big men in the senate, we should have chiefly mere money-makers.

And selfishness is so impotent.

Nobody ought to know this more than the average rich man who shows boredom in his face. I will guarantee that there is more complaining, murmuring and discontent in the homes of those who have made much during the war, than there is in the homes of those whose sons paid the supreme price of their idealism.

They increased their goods and are so bored that in innumerable cases man and wife cannot live together.

But selfishness is no more important in the homes of the new rich than it is in the ranks of labor.

General Pershing struck a responsive chord when he reminded the unions that patriotism was the product of the individual American and not selfish corporations, whether of capital or labor.

The laboring man has avowedly rejected God and gone after his rights.

Let us assume that he has a perfect right to do this. What has been the result?

Their leadership has also been self-seeking. Men who are not lovers of God are not lovers of their fellow-men and when they get into positions of power they feel no more love for their fellow-laboring men than they are capable of showing for their personal friends. They become bosses because they are selfish men. Men like Trotsky and Bill Hayward do not love their fellowmen. They merely envy and hate those who are in the saddle, and when they in turn are in the saddle they are more ruthless than their predecessors.

I am sure that there is no hope for labor without God in the world.

They may get shorter hours and more wages but their children will not rise up and call them blessed, for they are not the men that their fathers were.

No man can be great who is merely self-centered. No nation can be mighty when selfishness has

broken its ranks into class hatreds and those who demand special privileges for their particular class.

When more than sixty per cent of a nation has rejected God, that nation is in a fair way to become apostate, and when a whole nation becomes an aggregation of self-seeking individuals, it will lose its power, whether that power be commercial, political or moral.

We will be justly despised of the nations which are ill, when our policy of isolation demands that we be clothed in purple and fine linen and that we fare sumptuously every day.

Unionized Religion

ONE of our leading weekly periodicals recently ran a series of communications in which various persons told the world "what the matter is with the Church."

In very few of these letters was there any adequate appreciation of the fact that the chief trouble with the Church is, the people.

The Church as a potent factor in civilization is scarcely on trial.

It has been demonstrated time and again what it could do with people.

It was the one potent factor which tamed and civilized the Anglo-Saxon savages and Scandinavian pirates from whom we are descended.

It is the only potent factor that has ever attempted to do anything with Fiji cannibals and Polynesian head-hunters.

It is the only instrument of our rather smug civilization which has ever carried its benevolent influence into Uganda or Metlakatla.

The only other stimulants, which the Caucasian race has ever attempted to give the savage, have been racial prejudices and bad whiskey.

Really the Church as an institution has done so much more for the race than the modern critics of the Church are doing that it would be more seemly for the people to confess their own sin in abandoning the one instrument of grace that the world has

known and substituting generalizing negations for personal service.

The real trouble with agriculture is usually poor soil and muddled heads.

As a rule the Providence of God is to be depended upon; but, strange to say, whenever a flood or an earthquake destroys the crops, it is called a visitation of God.

Why that curious name? God visits us with sunlight and rain and fertile soil, yet we emphasize exceptional acts of destruction as His visits.

Man is prone to lay the blame of things on God.

What is this Church that is so frequently discussed?

It is so easy to enter a general indictment against a mere fiction of the mind. It must be apparent that the Church is one of two things: Either it is the instrument of God to convey grace to men, or else it is the creation of men to convey information to God.

Either it is an organization founded by Christ to tell men about God, or else it is an ecclesiastical union organized by men to tell God what man wants.

You belong either to the Corporate Body of Christ or else to the union.

If you belong to the Corporate Body you are apt to be long on your privileges as a member of the Corporation and are apt to be looking for dividends more than service.

And if you belong to the union you are apt to be long on grievances and short on a sense of personal responsibility.

The old mediaeval corporation was apt to abuse its privileges. The Reformation was a unionizing of religious workers, and they are strong in airing their grievances and shouting for shorter hours of service and better wages in the way of ecclesiastical attractions.

And the worst of it is that the shorter the hours and the better the sermon the less labor one gets in return.

The best laborers I know in the Church are not the product of fine sermons, but rather of a good conscience.

These new ecclesiastical unions want none of that "penny a day" stuff, although they are rather keen for the eleventh-hour privileges.

They hang about the market place and tell us how the Church should be run, but no burden and heat of the day for them.

It is true that no man has hired them, but not because they have received no invitation to work, but because they are on a strike for shorter hours and better sermons.

Men are very prone to complain about the weather, their religion and the policies of the administration.

This is not a sign of an enlightened conscience, nor of a constructive mind, but rather that the disease is catching. It is easy to condemn a government that you couldn't run to save your life and to tell what the Church ought to do when you yourself are doing nothing.

The only legitimate critic is the hard worker, and

he is so engrossed in his work that he forgets to criticize.

There is a quadruped who whenever he stops work begins to kick and bray. He is a fairly intelligent animal, but has an unsociable disposition.

The vineyard is here, and it is the Lord's will that we should work therein. The fact that we have poor overseers and poor grub does not justify a strike, for, after all, God is expecting us to work and isn't interested in our complaints.

A poor preacher may be His test of your sincerity, and I doubt whether He will accept your alibi when pay day comes.

Ruskin has defined a critic as "a painter who cannot paint, himself."

It is a suggestive definition and fairly comprehensive in its conclusiveness.

We may as well recognize that the Kingdom of Heaven includes the Corporation and the workers and that the interest of one is the interest of both.

The Church must go on and do the work that it is ordained of God to do. If those who temporarily represent the Corporation are poor "stuff," the workers in the vineyard do not please God by going on a strike. They merely please themselves and the vineyard grows more weedy and less productive.

We are not going to improve the spiritual force which the Church has always contained when men stir up the gift of the Spirit, by pulling out of the Kingdom.

The truth is that God made a Church which He never intended should be acceptable to quitters.

It is the grit of continuance in good works which God demands, and those who murmur are destroyed by the serpents of anger, envy and hate, and those who persist in complaining are destroyed by the Destroyer.

If the Church in any particular age has been run down (as it frequently has) then it has owed its resurrection to the persistence of good men who stick to the Cross of Christ, when all the rabble about is gabbing.

It boils itself down to this:

Your life is your job and God is your Master.

He knows what is going on better than you do, and it is harder for Him to put up with poor priests than it is for you to put up with poor preachers.

If He sends you into no man's land of spiritual desolation, He expects you to carry on with the same fidelity to Him that you would manifest if you held a title deed to the Garden of Eden.

The real answer to the complaint is to be found in your definition of the Church.

Is God a hard Master who calls you to an unprofitable job? If so, then strike, but do not imagine that you have reached the end of the question. You are as responsible as Trotsky for what happens afterward, for you have contributed to the chaos by your desertion of the forces that make for law and order.

Poor Relations

IT IS a very general sentiment among business men today, that true charity consists in helping people to help themselves.

Because of this sentiment, many busy people are discharging their duty of philanthropy by writing a check which some professional charity worker disburses, having divided said check into overhead, underfoot and under-the-belt expenses.

This charity becomes a part of the industrial system in which we are condemned to lose our identity by the beneficent will of our secular deities, known once as Mammon, and now as Magnates.

No magnate, big or small, likes to feel that some poor barnacle is attaching itself to the polished sides of his vessel. He does not like to be leaned upon too heavily by poor relations.

It is bad for the poor relations and disquieting for the magnates.

I wonder sometimes if God hasn't a lot of poor relation who are leaning upon Him very hard.

We speak of God as the "Giver of all good things," and we may not like to confess it but even the richest of us are beggars in God's sight.

Now there is no disgrace in being the recipients of gifts—

For we receive our life and all that we have as a gift from God.

"We are saved by grace, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God."

The disgrace lies in the way in which we make our returns for the gift received.

One way to avoid assuming any responsibility of gratitude is to deprive God of personality and call Him force. Of course, we can receive water from a faucet without manifesting any act of gratitude in return.

So we speak of God as nature, and say that "Nature gives so and so"—and then we are under no obligation to make any return in worship.

The moment we believe in a personal God, we fasten upon ourselves the responsibility for returning thanks to the person who gives us those good things.

The moment we realize that we are the recipients of God's charity, then we must see that the rules which we apply to our poor, apply likewise to His poor; and those rules are, that we do not waste that which has been given us by the kindness of another; that we make some act of appreciation for the gratuity that we have received; and that we use the gifts thus received so as to develop in us the spirit of self-help.

This seems to be the threefold purpose of religion.

1st. We are like the poor miner who has been grub-staked.

God has given us all things necessary to search for treasure.

The question is, what are we looking for? Riches for ourselves, or treasure for God? And our treasure is not His treasure. He is perfectly willing that we should seek and enjoy our treasure, if we will

show some interest in returning to Him that which He seeks.

And what can we give God that He wants, in return for that which He has given us?

We can give Him worship, which is a kind of gratitude; and we can give Him our love, which is a surrender of ourselves. Or we can shrivel up into a thankless, self-important atom.

God must be very tired of the crowd of poor relations, who take from Him and are impressed only with their own arrogance.

Certainly He will no more permit flesh to glory in His presence than would an ordinary millionaire allow a poor relation to flaunt his own importance in his face.

There is a modesty which rich beggars ought to seek.

2nd. Ingratitude is the basest of vices, and the ingrate the least attractive of all beggars.

Let your requests and supplications be made unto God with thanksgiving, and then, and only then, will the peace of God rule in your hearts.

One can understand how men, who believe in a blind force as the giver of all good things, feel no obligation to be grateful. But a man who believes in God must expect such God to believe in gratitude.

We do not merely worship God because He needs it; we worship God also to preserve our self-respect. If all good gifts come from the Father of light, then there can be but one adequate return for those gifts, and that is adoration.

It is just this attitude of mind that differentiates beggars from one another.

Better be a beloved vagabond than a churlish boor, which is about the measure of some of God's prosperous poor relations.

But we are told by experts that there is one real purpose in charity; and that is to teach the poor to help themselves, so that they can be self-respecting.

It's a poor rule that doesn't work both ways. And unless we receive our blessings from a faucet, then perchance, God is watching His beneficiaries to see whether the manhood which He desires is being created by the blessings that he bestows.

He is very generous to us; are we generous to others?

He puts up with many slights from us; are we equally patient with others?

He sent His son into the world to give us a standard of manhood that none are brash enough to question.

Are God's gifts to us having such an effect, that we are even anxious to grow more like Him?

It is odd that God's blessings either make us more human or more trivial.

The more human seek to find their joy in helping others.

The more trivial lose their joy in fussing about what they have failed to get.

There is nothing more pitiful in God's world than one of God's poor relations, with his arms full of things, frantically grabbing for more things, with no gratitude and much complaining.

We are all God's poor relations. We cannot help that; but we can be decent poor relations and not selfish pigs if we believe that He is interested in the charity He administers.

Sins of the Church

CHRIST came to a world in which fear, hate and cruelty ruled in the person of the Caesars. Caligula, Nero, Domitian were imperial cowards who feared, hated and cruelly abused those who surrounded them.

When such brutes sat on thrones, liberty was in chains and righteousness perished in the arena.

The mob was frivolous, brutal, pitiless. There was no Church then to blame.

For three centuries Christians lived in constant dread that their very innocence would cause them to be thrown to the lions or torn asunder by the wolf-pack.

The security in which we live was won by the blood of martyrs who refused to sacrifice their convictions. There was no motto of "Safety First" in the course which they pursued.

They held not their lives dear but gave them bravely, more bravely than soldiers on the field of battle, for the love of Christ.

It is strictly true that the blood of these martyrs was the seed not only of the Church but of constitutional government as well.

"The deepest, nay, the only theme of the world's history, to which all others are subordinate," said Goethe, "is the conflict of faith and unbelief."

To which Mr. Lecky adds:

"The epochs in which faith, in whatever form it may be, prevails, are the marked epochs in human

history, full of heart-stirring memories and of substantial gains for all after-times.

The epochs in which unbelief, in whatever form it may be, prevails, even when for a moment they put on the semblance of glory and success, inevitably sink into insignificance in the eyes of posterity which will not waste its thoughts on things barren and unfruitful." So speak the great poet and the eminent historian of recent times.

And this is so because there is but one motive that is potent enough to restrain men from the selfish lusts which consume them; and to incite them to those active efforts which make possible home and fatherland.

Men who think as superficially about life as do those who exaggerate the value of material success, imagine that by endowing institutions of learning, one safeguards best these institutions; but they were not produced by wealth nor has the great increase of schools and colleges made the home more sacred or kept our political institutions more holy.

To quote Mr. Lecky once more (and he surely is a dispassionate witness) in speaking of the Church:

"None of the modern influences of society can be said to have superseded it. Modern experience has furnished much evidence of the insufficiency of mere intellectual education, if it is unaccompanied by the education of character, and it is on this side that modern education is most defective."

Yet the whole temper of American life is saturated with the idea that learning is a substitute for grace in the training of future Americans. We

Christians send our children to be educated in universities where the atmosphere is cynical of faith, and if we have surplus wealth to leave we endow these institutions regardless of the trend which they may adopt toward our traditional faith or our constitutional government.

We refuse to recognize the value of love as Christ embodied it as an essential factor in Christian education. Why?

Because we do not ourselves possess it, and we do not possess it because we value it lightly.

And yet such love does more to make home and country than any quantity of biological facts arranged in orderly sequence. Mere education may result in more push buttons and better carburetors, but it can no more make homes than can a furniture emporium.

Faith, hope and charity are the three musketeers which St. Paul summoned to overthrow the false civilization of the Roman Empire and the greatest of these is charity, but for all that they go together, "all for one and one for all," and where one is effective, it is because it is attended by the other two.

In looking around for the forces which the Church needs today to win her victories, let us not despise these three, for without them the Church is impotent to carry on its nation-wide campaign.

It is not primarily a question of cajoling our constituents to put millions in our treasury but it is primarily a question of converting souls to God—so that not only wealth is consecrated, but men, and men will

be consecrated only as they believe, have courage and are lovers of mankind.

In all the eager attempts of various denominations to gain supremacy it is curious that none seem to specialize in these qualities for they are sorely lacking in the Church atmosphere of America.

As one priest has well put it, "How can we kindle hearts with coals from the altar when we have to drag them through a refrigerator to do so?"

Nor is this coldness something of which the Church is guilty and you are absolved. Rather, it is that the Church is cold because your love is cold.

Christ did not endow a cold Church with His Spirit; nor did the Christians who overcome organized paganism do it because they had joined a refrigeration plant.

Put this down as fundamentally true: The Church is cold because my faith is cold and I am no better than my neighbors if I stand still and talk about the weather.

If you will do a fair amount of intelligent exercise you will develop a glow that will not only keep you from the cold but will help to warm someone else.

Whence then, come these icy drafts? They come from the doors and windows which the Church opens to the world.

The worldliness of a cold world blows through these open doors and chills all who have that pernicious anaemia of little faith.

In the early days the Church was a potent influence in the world. Today the world is a powerful influence in the Church and because we have flimsy

garments we get chilled through and through. Let us examine some of these icy drafts which chill enthusiasm and produce goose-flesh instead of ruddy skin.

First, the gospel of the glassy eye, which is so powerful in keeping the requisite distance between caste and caste that it has invaded the sanctity of the friendly Nazarene.

We are deluged with prosperous people who regard the treasures of Egypt as greater riches than the reproach of Christ, utterly oblivious to the fact that the hauteur of worldly society is an impertinence in the shop of the Nazarene carpenter.

Social conventions, expensive costumes and frigid demeanor may be *au fait* in good society but they are *de trop* in the courts of heaven.

When can we learn that we do not go into God's house to magnify ourselves, and that the more exalted we may be among our fellow-men the more humble we must be before the King of Kings.

Our majesty may be very real to us in a gilded salon, but it ought to shrink into its true proportions before His infinite Majesty.

The Christ was often majestic among men, especially important people, but He was always most humble before God.

Just because the Church of Christ must surround its members with the atmosphere of courtesy and good manners, is the reason why we are patronized so often by the four hundred, but it is no reason why priests and prelates as well as Church wardens and

vestrymen should so often acquiesce in giving the Church all the frigid dullness of a social function.

We need to lose our self-consciousness in the consciousness of Christ. If we are putting on Christ, we will unconsciously stop thinking of ourselves.

And then there is the icy draught that comes from the counting house. Christ cleared out the tables of the money-changers, but He could not drive out their influence.

Before Christ each capitalist or practical business man should be as he is in his own family circle, unless he is altogether mammonized—just himself.

I do not know that skill in handling securities should give a man any special influence in the House of Him who is seeking other treasures.

A Church is not primarily a business concern and while it is perfectly true that business men have the right to help the parish to be conducted along right business lines, they have no right to superimpose the worldly vision of business upon the ideals of the God-man.

Christ did not come to take lessons from financiers but to save them from themselves.

And the third worldly influence that keeps the Church cold is the dead furnace which ought to keep it warm.

I refer to the ranks of labor, from whom were Peter and John and Christ. These suffered gladly for an ideal, but that element which ought to be the backbone of the venture which Christ made, like Peter, deny him with a curse.

That which should be the element from which

Christ gathers his disciples, seeks a worldly kingdom, follows Godless leaders, whines about its rights, and ditches its responsibilities.

Rich man! poor man! begger man! thief! The same man, with the same passions, until the love of Christ becomes the guiding motive of His life; then his temporal condition is lost in the service of the Master.

He has found the pearl of great price and sold all to possess it.

When will we cease to hear these vaporings about the sins of the Church?

She exists to fulfill the purpose of her Divine Master but she can succeed only when those who are violently in love with Christ take it by force and by love make it the force that Christ himself was and that the Church also was when the members who composed it suffered all things for the love of Christ.

If the Church fails, it is because you and I are cold—for there is just one thing which will warm the Church and that is members who themselves are possessed with the love of Christ and this it lacks because men lack love.

What Christ lacked then was not warmth but those who were willing to suffer with Him for love.

What the Church lacks today is not warmth but those who are willing to suffer loss for His sake.

The Church needs men of wealth who do not inflict the Church with the idea that it exists to make securities more secure, but that it exists to make men more human. The Church needs laboring men who esteem the love of Christ as more potent than the

wealth they envy, and who have never won any battle by force, but only as they themselves have become conquerors by being more righteous than their masters.

The Church needs men of good manners who esteem the reproach of Christ great riches than the treasures of society.

Foundations

LET me quote from Chesterton's "What I Saw in America" because that which I am quoting would be the very thing that one would expect Chesterton to see. It is one of the outstanding features of a democracy like ours that it should be eternally questioning the foundations of its faith and everlastingly endeavoring to find other foundations upon which can be built a structure that will give us all of the benefits of a democracy without requiring the individual citizen to put forth that strenuous effort by which alone a democracy can be preserved.

As Chesterton truly says, "There is no basis for democracy except in a dogma about the divine origin of man. That is a perfectly simple fact which the modern world will find out more and more to be a fact. Every other basis is a sort of sentimental comparison, full of merely verbal echoes of the older creeds. Those verbal associations are always vain for the vital purpose of constraining the tryant. An idealist may say to a capitalist, 'Don't you sometimes feel in the dim twilight, when the lights twinkle from the distant hamlet in the hills, that all humanity is a holy family?' But it is equally possible for the Capitalist to reply with brevity and decision, 'No, I don't,' and there is no more disputing about it further than about the beauty of a fading cloud."

In other words unless you build your structure of sentiment upon foundations of definite conviction, you are building upon sands.

Foundations are not spectacular things; they cost a lot of time and effort; they consist of solid and substantial material; they are not capable of inducing sentimental rapsodies; but they have to be there unless you are prepared to see the whole structure tumble down for the lack of them.

Definite convictions are the only true foundations of beautiful sentiment, and when the necessity of the foundation is ignored, the ruin of the building, however beautiful, is merely a question of time.

There is no more dangerous lunatic in the whole community, than the builder who says, never mind about the foundations, let us put up the structure.

Let me quote Chesterton again:

“Hundreds have heard the story about the mediæval demagogue who went about repeating the rhyme:

When Adam delved and Eve span,
Who was then the gentleman?

“Many have doubtless offered the obvious answer to the question,—‘The Serpent.’ But few seem to have noticed what would be the more modern answer to the question if that innocent agitator went about propounding it. Adam never delved and Eve never span, for the simple reason that they never existed. They are fragments of a Chaldean-Babylonian myth and Adam is only a slight variation of Tag-Tug, pronounced better.

“For the real beginning of humanity we refer you to ‘Darwin’s Origin of Species.’ And then the modern man would go on to justify plutocracy to the

mediaeval man by talking about the Struggle of Life and the Survival of the Fittest; and how the strongest man seized authority by means of anarchy, and proved himself a gentleman by behaving like a cad.

"Now I do not base my beliefs on the theology of John Ball, or on the literal and materialistic reading of the text of Genesis, though I think the story of Adam and Eve infinitely less absurd and unlikely than that of the prehistoric strongest man who could fight a hundred men.

"The Declaration of Independence dogmatically bases all rights on the fact that God created all men equal; and it is right; for if they were not created equal, they were certainly evolved unequal."

Once more let me quote:

"Nine times out of ten a man's broadmindedness is necessarily the narrowest thing about him. His vision of his own village may be really full of varieties; and even his vision of his own nation may have a rough resemblance to the reality. But his vision of the world is probably smaller than the world; his vision of the universe is certainly much smaller than the universe. Hence he is never so inadequate as when he is universal; he is never so limited as when he generalizes.

"This is the fallacy in many modern attempts at a creedless creed, as something variously described as essential Christianity, or undenominational religion or a world faith to embrace all the faiths in the world."

This is rather a long text for the observations which I desire to make.

Back of our democracy there is a constitution and the reason why we have carried on as a democracy without running amuck, as they have run in Russia and did run in France, is because we had some constitutionalists at the foundation of our government. Washington and Hamilton and Marshall gave us a foundation upon which Jefferson and Madison and Monroe helped to build a republic.

Had we had nothing but constitutionalists we would have had a Monarchy and had we had nothing but sentimentalists we would have ended in chaos.

Liberty, fraternity and equality are fine words but unless they are builded upon certain Constitutional foundations, they will not weather the storms.

The Church is in danger from sentimentalists who boast that they have no theology; grow impatient at any dogmatic statements and want to build a beautiful air castle upon their rather attractive personalities.

“Other foundations for the Christian Church cannot be laid than that which is laid” and that foundation is the life of Jesus Christ as witnessed by the Apostles.

When modern Christians propose to substitute for the foundations of the Christian Church the dogmatic statements of modern science, they are substituting a material that has never shown its ability to stand the strain for one that has stood for centuries, and is as strong today as it has ever been.

Science deals with a cosmos of mechanical processes; and it helps us to understand the mechanical purpose of the universe. Religion deals with a uni-

verse of personal relationships and helps us to understand the moral purpose of the universe.

If a father attempted to bring up his children by invoking the principles of applied mechanics, he would have about the same kind of a family as we will have when we have a Church based upon purely scientific principles.

Science has its sphere of operation, but it is helpless in the sphere of personal relationships.

You cannot arrive at a knowledge of God by scientific methods any more than you can invoke the laws of mechanics to enter into personal friendships. Whatever God is, I am very sure that He does not exist for the purpose of furnishing arrogant curiosity seekers with a solution of their problems.

The Church has done its work because it has been able to inspire men with love of a person as the motivation of human conduct; and it never has and never can do its work because it has a foundation in speculative analysis.

A scientific dogma is an hypothesis based upon certain ascertained facts from which the attempt is made to draw certain conclusions. The dogmas of science change as new facts are ascertained and they are limited by the large pleroma of unascertained facts which always surround us.

The dogmas of the Christian religion are based upon the experience of certain chosen witnesses as to the life and teaching of Jesus Christ.

The data for altering those facts is manifestly lacking. We cannot enter into that personal relationship which the Apostles enjoyed.

We must either accept their testimony or reject it. We cannot reconstruct the life of Jesus Christ as the result of scientific investigation. In so far as Christian dogma deals with His birth, death, resurrection and ascension we cannot re-examine the witnesses. We can merely advance certain theories of explanation which in the nature of the case cannot take the place of the original facts.

The Masculine Ingredient

I HAVE just come from a Church meeting. There were eight or ten business men. These men stood high in their community which is not a large one. Nearly all of them were confirmed members of the Church. They were all men scrupulously honest, unusually intelligent, good fathers and good husbands.

These men, as is usually the case with members of this Church, were upstanding men in the community where they lived.

They stood for public improvements, were generous contributors to any movement for the uplift of the young. They were absolutely without cant. They abhorred any mechanical conception of religion in which they would be mere puppets. They were leaders in business, efficient in public works, standing for the very best in American politics. But one thing was lacking as one studied and admired them.

They lacked definite religious convictions. They had no spiritual enthusiasms. They made no personal sacrifices in exerting a spiritual influence.

And the one thing, which transforms a man into a spiritual force for righteousness, and which that particular community sorely needed they could not or did not supply.

My mind travels to another scene in which a judge is reported to have said in a juvenile court: "There seems to be a wave of juvenile crime passing over

America today, and the culprits seem to lack any appreciation of the seriousness of their offenses." Expressed in another way, there is scarcely a community in America today, where, when the time comes for young boys to form their associates, parents are not seriously concerned as to the influences which shall surround these boys.

And this apprehension is felt equally in small towns or large cities. Those who can afford it, look for a private school in which their boys can escape the temptations of the gang. It is a mooted question whether it is safer to bring boys up in the rough atmosphere of the streets or in the artificial atmosphere of the ordinary private school. Shall I run the risk of having my boy grow up tough or snob-bish? And yet the communities in which these boys grow up are places where boys ape men, and try to be like the men whom they know.

And who are the men that they imitate? Those who appeal to the boy's weakness. The man who is democratic, coarse and hearty exerts an influence over youth that good clothes, good manners, and good habits do not exert unless they make a distinct effort to do so. It requires a considerable effort for the man to learn good manners, good habits and good morals.

But when he has learned these marks of the Christian gentleman, it requires far more effort for him to carry his influence into the realm of boyhood. He can do it as no other man can, but he cannot do it unless he makes a distinct effort to do it, for the

boy has not yet arrived at the point where these things appeal to him.

In other words, we have a condition in Christian America which is rather appalling.

The American man is not a force in stimulating young boys to imitate him, because his spiritual convictions are passive rather than active; he is not thinking in terms of spiritual influence; he esteems the message of the gospel but he is not a force in making it felt among the young. He will work hard to leave money for his children to spend, but he will not press hard to give a spiritual inheritance to the young.

On the other hand evil men are always a force—just as diphtheria is an epidemic which spreads easily; while anti-toxin is the result of much labor and great effort.

We need an anti-toxin to the moral and spiritual epidemics that are raging in America today among the young. And what should that anti-toxin be? I know of no other successful resistant than an aggressive spiritual force which may be exerted by Christian men.

We rather expect that the clergy and mothers should look after the morals of the young, and they do so as far as they can. But no man has an alibi from doing his share to raise American boys in high ideals.

Man can raise cattle and hogs; they can erect buildings and railways; they can form lodges and clubs; but they are not exerting the moral and spiritual force upon youth that is so urgently needed.

The problem begins when the boy is about twelve years of age.

He is under women at school and in Sunday school; he is under his mother at home and he is under the gang influence on the street. Where does the man come in at that time when a man is needed to mould the growing boy?

Is the father vitally interested in his son's spiritual development? Is the good man as concerned with the growing boys in his community as he is in the shade trees or the paving?

Is the rector aided by strong men, who being strong themselves are capable of imparting just the tone to education which the adolescent youth requires?

It is all right to be a success in your business or profession, but that very success should establish a sense of gratitude to God so you will be anxious to pass on what has been received as a contributing force in the spiritual development of the rising youth.

It is all right to enjoy the perquisites of one's own success, but there is one thing lacking when we feel no gratitude for what we have received and no responsibility to pass on our influence.

The Church is a mixture and it is only when the mixture is right that the influence is effective.

We need the scholarly, cultivated rector who is the prophet, priest and pastor.

We need the conscientious, consecrated devotion of holy women. We need the bright enthusiasm of children.

We need also the strong practical influence of successful men. If the mixture fails to move the car, it is because the last ingredient is lacking or it not present in sufficient quantity.

The religious man is too apt to be an unbalanced character, who functions in the ecclesiastical field because it is unoccupied. And then when someone whom red-blooded men do not particularly respect, takes hold to contribute whatever there is of the masculine ingredient, your strong man turns petulantly away and says, "If that is masculine religion, I want none of it."

He is too self-centered to see that his very attitude is fatal to the growing boy, and that his excuse does not relieve him from responsibility, but rather increases it. What business has he to turn away from just that responsibility? Who has excused him from the draft?

Who has countersigned his alibi? The Church is a volunteer army except as the Lord drafts men through their own consciences.

Is it a sufficient sop to one's conscience to reply to God, "This weakling is serving Thee in the Church. I am therefore exempt and will leave the future of American boys to a diluted masculine influence?" There is no alibi for any Christian man by which he has any right to enjoy the blessings of God's bounty and then exempt himself from the responsibility of doing that which God lays at his gate.

I believe Christian influence is suffering more to-

day from holding back of the masculine ingredient as a spiritual force than from any other cause.

The Church has men. She has a right to look to them as spiritual forces.

Nor is it an adequate excuse to say that you are doing this through a lodge or club. The lodge and the club have their use, but the Lord God established the Church to be the instrument through which moral and spiritual forces should be exerted.

Who are you that substitutes something which you declare to be just as good when God has bidden you to do this one thing? Would you really dare to make this excuse, face to face with your Judge, that you had no confidence in the instrument which He had established and had substituted something else; especially when the chief trouble with God's instrument is the withdrawal of your own force from its energy?

Wicked Lambs

IN DENVER recently we had the trial and conviction of a score of bunco men who had victimized a large number of credulous folk with a clever swindle by which the victims were supposed to get a large sum of money for a relative small investment.

The swindlers had considerable capital and it cost the state a whole lot of money to convict them.

After they had been incarcerated an attorney said to me: "The state ought now to prosecute the victims." After considering the matter awhile I thought the point was well taken, for from the standpoint of honesty and integrity the lambs were no better than the wolves, simply more foolish.

And so my mind went back to the words of the practical Apostle, "Be ye doers of the Word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." Surely the man who deceives himself is living a fake life. Unfortunately, it is so easy to deceive ourselves.

We never fool God; we seldom fool our neighbors for a long period of time; we are so prone to fool ourselves, and as soon as we have succeeded in fooling ourselves we become the prey of all sorts of fakirs.

For a fakir has very little chance of victimizing a man who has real convictions.

The world is full of Lydia Pinkhams, Get-Rich-Quick Wallingfords, Professional Soul Savers, Political Demagogues, Philosophical Quacks, Predatory

Prophets and Prophetesses just because there are so many people who do not think straight, who lack definite moral convictions and whose flabby consciences are willing to make a personal profit by subordinating a principle to some immediate personal advantage.

If they are poor, they will do anything to get rich; if they are sick they will do anything to get well; if they are conscience-stricken they will do anything to get saved, no matter whether the "anything" is unreasonable, immoral and manifestly impossible.

In other words, they fancy that God has made a world in which privileged persons may do evil in order that good may come.

Their immediate necessity seems to be the mother of their inventions to fool themselves into thinking that they are fooling God.

The great sin of this so-called practical age is the failure to so evaluate morals as to put them first in their standard of life. Let me enumerate the sins of unreality to which human greed and vanity will carry our poor human nature so that we become the victims of predatory professionals.

The first guilt of unreality that finds lodgment in the human brain is the exaggeration of our individual importance because of some purely extraneous accident.

This may be due to the fact that we have inherited or accumulated wealth, knowledge, social position or political influence.

As soon as a man fancies that he is something of a superman or miniature Kaiser, he substitutes

sham for reality and becomes the eager victim of psychical sharpers who appeal to his vanity and destroy his sanity.

He fancies that because he can command servants or disciples or social climbers that he belongs to a distinctive caste which is in some mysterious way superior to the contacts and reactions of ordinary life.

All one can say is that he is due for a tremendous cropper in the Day of Judgment, even if he carries his fiction into an elegant and capacious mausoleum.

There are no supermen as the Lord Jesus very plainly indicated, and we are in reality every one members one of another, for God has made of one blood all nations of the earth and there is no respect of persons.

The men who hasn't humility is the hopeless victim of attractive liars. He may be practical in every other way, but is believing a lie when he fancies himself superior to the common obligations of us all.

I know of nothing that requires closer self-scrutiny than the absolute necessity of not overestimating our own importance, unless it be the correlative sin of personal vanity, which is envy.

In the same category as this primary class are all those who have failed to gain recognition for a success which they imagine that they ought to have attained.

Let me quote from a work of fiction, words that describe just what I mean:

"He was the kind of a man who being first of all a disappointment to himself, had never forgiven him-

self for his failure, and was consequently disagreeable to everyone else in proportion to that person's success."

The same human soul that will be arrogant over success will be bitter under adversity. The Kaiser in Prussia is identically the same person as the Kaiser in Holland!

The difference is not in the soul of the man, but in the accident of his environment.

Just as Napoleon showed the smallness of his greatness in the retreat from Moscow.

In all times of our adversity as well as in all times of our prosperity, may the good Lord deliver us from playing the fool.

There are two ways by which the unscrupulous spiritual adventurer can play upon human nature. The one is to ingratiate himself by flattering the vanity of the successful; and the other is to proclaim to the man who pities himself the wrongs which he fancies that he endures.

This is the stock in trade of the professional demagogue, and inasmuch as most people are discontented with their lot and envious of others, he readily gains a large and sympathetic audience.

Many large and influential political and religious sects are built upon the emotional appeal to the wrongs of their hearers and the vices of those who are absent.

The next streak in human nature which unfits men from a rigid evaluation of themselves is anger.

An angry man is temporarily insane. I know be-

cause I have been angry, and I never was angry in my life when I didn't play the fool.

It makes no difference whether the anger is a sudden flare or a brooding, sullen flame, it accomplishes the same result—it warps a man's judgment of himself, so that he is incapable of reason.

A priest who loses his temper, scolds his people, grumbles at his fate, must either seek another parish or see the one that he shepherds fall to pieces.

The layman who is constantly taking offense at this or resenting that is a poor soldier of Christ and will end by losing his faith in order to propitiate his idol.

Whole parishes have been ruined and the joy of service has been impaired because there are two or three madmen in the congregation.

Greed is perhaps the most prolific of those vices which make a truly spiritual life impossible, for one cannot serve two masters, his own selfish interest and God's will.

It is the most difficult vice for a man to recognize in himself, for the meanness becomes so much a part of one's self that it is almost impossible for the man to distinguish between the me and the meanness.

But in all instances it is the same. When a man refuses to acknowledge his fault, but rather excuses it or condones it, he becomes incapable of receiving the truth.

It is then true, as Christ said so strangely and yet so accurately, "Because I tell you the truth therefore you will not believe me."

A perverted mind which refuses to discipline itself

becomes the victim of perverted prophets, just because it refuses to think straight, to be honest with itself and prefers the comfortable lie to the unwelcome truth.

Man's first conquest must be the accurate inventory of his own liabilities. Unless he is willing to do this he will end in moral and spiritual bankruptcy.

PART III

THE CHURCH

Your Light

THE grace of God is like an electric current by which your home is lighted and your work is accomplished. There are four essential things in an electric current.

1st There is the dynamo that generates the electricity. This may be far away from your home, but it is the source of light and heat by which your home is illuminated.

2nd There is the wire by which the electricity is conducted to your home, so long as the current is unbroken.

3rd There is outside of your home a transformer by which the current is adapted to the needs of the family.

4th There is the bulb which gives out the light or the plate which sends forth heat.

If you turn on the button and one of the bulbs fails to give out light, you do not imagine that there is no dynamo, nor that the wire is not transmitting the current, nor even that your transformer is out of order. There are other bulbs that are shining and so long as any light shines in the room you know that the trouble lies in the particular bulb or bulbs which fail to shine.

And yet how many foolish folk have said that there was no God or that the Church was a failure or that the parish was dead just because some one Christian from whom they had expected light or heat gave forth darkness or was cold to the touch.

For God sending His Holy Spirit in the Day of Pentecost is the dynamo, who sends forth His light and His truth into a dark place.

And the Holy Catholic Church has been the wire that has brought down the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ through all the centuries without a break in the current. And the Parish Church is the transformer which breaks up the grace of God for your own particular needs.

And you and your neighbors are the bulbs which send forth light, provided they have made the connection and are intact within.

Of course you can not give the grace of Christ to others if you are not connected with Him in the way that He has prescribed. Those who have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ, and those who are in true communion with Christ dwell in Him and He in them.

But each bulb gives light or darkness if it is connected with Christ and intact within its own soul.

The conscience is like the very fine wire in the bulb. It must have a single purpose. It must not be broken so that it lacks singleness of purpose.

And after all when we fail to shed light into the darkness around us the fault is not elsewhere, it is within us, for many other bulbs have kept shining under more difficult circumstances than those which beset us. It is silly to blame God or the Church or the parish for our refusal to keep our touch with Christ or our unwillingness to keep our motives pure.

No one who really wants to shed forth the light of

the Gospel into an evil world can possibly have any other alibi than one of these two things. Either they have deliberately broken their connection with Christ, or else they have broken the slender thread of their own conscientious action.

All this refusal to observe these simple rules for being an instrument of light is silly in the light of the fact that Christ offers to infuse into your life the grace that you really seek.

Of course there are parishes which do not seem to be very good transformers. Perhaps you need a new plug somewhere. A conceited or opinionated priest; a worldly or infallible warden; a secular or lazy vestry; a guild of malicious busybodies; a dull or slovenly Sunday School may affect to a certain degree the lighting capacity of your parish; and in the course of time it may be possible to remove the carbonized plugs; but do not be over-anxious so long as some of the connections are possible. It is your business to let your light shine, not to reorganize the parish. If you will give the same anxious effort to establish your connection that you are apt to do in reforming someone else, you will help to keep the light shining in a dark place during a dark period.

How many of our parishes have been kept going through long and dreary periods of gloom, by the persistence of a few people who have never allowed these faulty plugs to sever their connection with Jesus Christ, and, I believe that He knows full well who they are and appreciates fully the service they have rendered.

Let me sum up this short chapter, by reaffirming certain principles of the Christian lighting system.

Christ is the source of grace.

His Church is the line of communication with Him.

Our parish is the instrument by which His grace is adapted to our need.

We are responsible for keeping the connection and preserving the integrity of our service.

May I say a word about those who do not try to make a connection themselves but who criticize those who do.

He has a little one-power candle which he uses to guide himself through a dark house, while he faults the darkness which surrounds him.

If you want to live in a light, cheery house, then make your connection with the light of the world and stop mumbling about the fact that you are condemned to walk in darkness.

For no man can give light who doesn't receive it, and criticizing darkness is not giving light by a good deal.

Only as men realize that Christ is the dynamo, can the world be filled with light.

One Thing Needful

THE GREATEST disappointment in Church life today is not, in my judgment, the theological difficulties which receive so much attention in certain quarters; nor is it in any great moral obliquities on the part of those who belong to the Church. The disappointment lies in the absence of friendliness in our parishes.

Whenever one tries to emphasize this quality in parish life, one is at once cognizant of certain cross-sections of parochial life that seem to prohibit any real unity of spirit in Christian warfare.

In the army these cross-sections were temporarily obliterated and the son of the toughest citizen was often the buddy of the scion of the most illustrious family.

The taboos of caste life were forgotten in the common denominator of the khaki uniform, and the exigencies of war.

But somehow the cause for which Christ and the martyrs gave their life-blood, does not seem to be a real enough warfare, so that "the rich and the poor must work together and the Lord is the maker of them all."

I am conscious wherever I go that there is a false emphasis in the household of faith in which the fellowship of the spirit is sanctified to other ideals, and the one great objective of the Master is set aside for other considerations.

The Church as it exists, so often consists of little

coteries of the best families; or such strata of the earth's social soil as contain pay dirt.

Too often the only point of contact is that of the Church treasurer, an annual visit of the pastor, and an urgent invitation to attend a sale at the parish house.

As an institution in which all are members one as another, such contacts are neither refreshing nor inspiring.

Excellent people, who crave a few warm friends and a circle of intimate mutual understanding, find themselves outside of a rigid caste, formed by a few best families who have long enjoyed mutual fellowship one with another and so use the Church as an opportunity for social enjoyment, perfectly satisfactory to themselves; absolutely unpenetrative to anyone else; and very limited in its kindness or enthusiasm.

There is no more delightful atmosphere than that which is created by a limited number of selected families who know and practice the ritual of good society and enjoy the mutual confidence and respect of one another. One cannot fault their taste, but one may doubt that they are fulfilling the purpose of their Master in seeking their own personal comfort instead of paying more attention to "the least of these their brethren."

These excellent groups of excellent Church people form one of the most difficult cross-sections in parochial life.

They are so nice to one another, that one "looks at heaven and longs to enter in;" but they are so

frigidly distant to anyone who violates their ritual code or fails to respect their peculiar excellence that one goes away humming "From Greenland's Icy Mountains."

It has been demonstrated time and again that no one can break into communion with these saints; therefore one waits with eagerness for the time to come when they themselves will awake to the fact that there is nothing in common with their little caste and the fellowship of Christ.

If it is true that these groups regard themselves as the most gracious Christians in God's world, then they need to learn that the Church of the Nazarene is not a bottling works, and grace was meant to flow out of gracious people to the least of these their brethren, and never be bottled for home consumption merely.

Unfortunately for the effectiveness of the Church's work, there are so often in these groups of really conscientious, cultivated Christians, a few equally charming people who are thoroughly worldly; who seem to be able to resist the call of the parson, charm he ever so wisely, and who dominate the rest. In other words, the really spiritually-minded parson runs into a cross-section of social caste, which holds together by stronger centripetal motives, than any centrifugal efforts of Christian grace can overcome.

The Church automatically ceases to become a refuge for sinners (except such sinners as wear the livery of eminent respectability) and become a hot-house for the propagation of rare orchids and costly poinsettias.

Surely Christ never intended that and I am afraid will not appreciate it.

There is a joyousness of life in expansion; in strength that assists weakness and confers blessings.

There is stagnation and paralysis in the caste idea; and not only do those without get no real benefit from those within, but the possessors of these good things stultify themselves by their failure to communicate their strength.

The Religion of Jesus Christ brought together all sorts and conditions of people, who formed a brotherhood in which their common love and common life proved a power for good in a world of caste.

There is something in the caste idea that is hateful to God's benevolence, and there is something in the perpetuation of caste that is fatal to those who rest in its anasthesia.

It is a powerful opiate and those who indulge see beautiful visions and produce ghastly results.

The idea of fellowship,—real, genuine brotherhood, is basic in the gospel of Christ and it is that phase of religion that is most difficult to realize and most rare in its achievement.

The fellowship of Christ involves all sorts and conditions of people, rich and poor, wise and simple, employer and employe, master and servant who do not allow their earthly differences to mar the unity of their spiritual fellowship.

It is a communion in which the poor are not proud, and the rich are not patronizing, but in which every element of society realizes that each is one ingredient only of a common whole; and that God is endeavor-

oring to blend the diversity of human life into a unity of human fellowship — so that the diversity is not lost and the unity is something real.

To accomplish this result it is not the poor and ignorant who need to be converted to the program, but rather it is the cultivated Christian who needs to be converted to the program of Christ.

The hope for a new order must come from those who are the best of the old order and they must make the sacrifice which will win the support of the humble and the meek.

Our own Church people must eventually learn to love the person that they do not like and do the thing that they do not want to do as good soldiers of Jesus Christ.

We have too many nice people in the Church who pray to God with reservations. "O Lord what wilt thou have me to do that I want to do already" is the real petition that many soldiers of Christ use to lull their own consciousness to sleep, for God never hears them.

Our Task

THE Hebrew religion divided the world into two classes, those who were keepers of the law and those who were open violators of the law. The Pharisees prided themselves upon their righteousness and despised all others. The sinners broke the law and acknowledged that they were sinners.

The law brought nobody to real righteousness, because those who kept the law were hard and merciless.

Christ made a new division of human nature.

He lived His life and taught His Gospel. Those who loved Him because He was the beloved, and those who rejected Him because they were incapable of loving Him, was the division He made.

This new division ignored the old one. In the ranks of His disciples were both Pharisees and sinners. Among the opposition also, both of these could be found.

He set a new standard of dividing the sheep from the goats, but men were so attached to the old standards that they refused to accept the new.

We call ourselves Christians, but we still adhere to the old Hebraic standards. We still divide the elect from the outcasts along the same conventional legal standards and call it Christianity. It isn't Christianity, but a revival of Hebraism.

We still keep up the old Pharisaic standards of legal righteousness. We ignore, as Christ did not, the limitations of heredity, temperament and enviro-

onment, classing men as respectable or disreputable, as they adhere to conventional standards or reject them. It is as unscientific as it is unchristian.

It is the real miracle of Christ's humanity that He should have anticipated the discoveries of modern psychology by two thousand years. Truly He knew what was in man far better than we know today. He knew, for example, that many sinners had never had a chance to be anything else but sinners and therefore He was keen to give them a chance to be righteous. But it was a different kind of a chance. They were to become righteous because they knew Him and loved Him. He could forgive their sins for He knew why they were sinners.

The woman who was a sinner loved Him on sight, and because she loved much He could forgive much. The thief on the cross had never had a chance. When the chance of loving Christ was given him, he loved Him on sight, and because he loved Him, Christ offered to admit him into paradise.

This is good psychology and therefore good religion.

Because of our weakness we put sinners in penitentiaries, which is a necessity; but then we forget them and leave them to the tender mercies of mercenaries, not bothering about the future of the sinner, but thinking only of the safety of the public.

To herd sinful men together in dull barracks, under brutal guards, without any concern about their spiritual needs is to miss our opportunity to reach the sinner who is capable of loving much. The practice is as stupid as it is disastrous, because it will

make a hardened sinner out of a good man and will never make good men out of sinners.

We observe the same principle in running our churches. We ignore the practice of Christ, who is our Master, and accept the standards of the world which is our enemy.

The churches are run for the spiritual enlightenment of the conventional good and without much concern for the needs of the potential good, who are debarred by the standards of conventional righteousness which we set up.

And this is the weakness of the Church and not its strength.

The Roman Catholic Church recognizes this, and in spite of the fact that she is guilty of legalism from another angle, she is not stupid enough to run her churches for Pharisees (even though many of them are good Pharisees), but for sinners.

And she does this, not because her priests are more tender than our clergy, but merely because she is strong in Church tradition, and has held tenaciously to this tradition—that the Church is for sinners, and so she is strong while we, who can outmatch her in the number of influential laymen, cannot match her in the power of humanitarian endeavor.

We have boxed up the Church by substituting the traditions of men for the commandments of Christ. We have accepted the conventional standards of the world for the more difficult standards of Christ.

It is tragic to consider the worldly influence of the millions that belong to us, with the spiritual influence that they exert as churchmen.

In the social, financial and political world we can set the pace, but in the spiritual world we apologize for our existence.

We suffer the torments of men who have fine convictions, but lack the courage to put them into practice.

Theoretically, the bulk of our people believe that which I have said, but practically they accept the traditions of our immediate ancestors.

As one looks at our practice one is convinced that we have both the traditions of the Master and the freedom of the sons of God, but we lack the spiritual courage to practice that which our formularies proclaim. Some day we will, and then I would like to be alive.

Some day our modernist knights, instead of using up their splendid talents in tilting at windmills, will direct their lances at the real Apollyon.

It is futile to attempt to clean up the principalities of this world until we have purified the force that can ultimately accomplish it.

It is puerile to use up energy in restating academic creeds in order that we may admit into our gates more influential laymen of the same apologetic type as those which we possess already.

What we who are thought to be radicals of various kinds ought to do is to combine in the effort to restate not our intellectual, but our moral standards of Church membership. What we need is not a patched-up Church unity of modern Pharisaism, but a practical demonstration that Christ's standards of Church membership are our standards, and that in the house

of God, the rich and the poor do meet together and the Lord is the maker of them all.

We need to get rid of, even at some financial loss, those who neither go into the gates of Heaven themselves, nor permit others to enter. We need a constituency which believes and practices the example of Christ and which does not father the Church by wrapping it in grave clothes of cultural respectability and academic hair-splitting.

We need to stop talking finance, even if we close up a lot of mendicant missions, and to live the gospel as it is in Christ and not as it is in respectable but thoroughly Hebraic vestries, who are far more concerned with "How much?" than they are concerned with "the least of these our brethren."

Let us stop talking platitudes and practice Christianity at whatever cost to the public treasury.

Do not misunderstand me. The Roman Catholic Church has substituted Hebraic discipline for the freedom of Christ. The Protestant world is frankly legalistic and hopelessly disorganized. The Church has both freedom and the organization to make herself the medium of Christ's ideals. This does not mean that she will be popular, financially strong or socially influential.

It means merely that by this means, and this means only, she can win the approval of her dear Master, and after all, what else matters in this inconsequential world?

Enthusiasms Without Piety

IT HAS been well said that the Christian Church is more unpopular because of the virtues which Christ demands of it, than because of the faults which the Church manifests. It is not because Christians are hypocrites than men side-step the obligations of the Church, but it is because men are not willing to lose their moral license in serving Christ. They fear that Christ is a hard master and that if they serve Him, He will require of them certain sacrifices which will deprive them of the liberty that they now enjoy.

They are like confirmed bachelors, who are willing to concede that married men have more happiness as they grow older, but insist that single men have more freedom, whereas any one, who makes a study of solitary men, knows that, as they grow older, they have no freedom at all and are the slaves of their own crochets, and perfectly miserable unless they can have things just as they are accustomed to have them.

It was the promise of Christ that those who served Him should have perfect freedom and we are told that the end of the Christian life is that we may enjoy the glorious liberty of the Sons of God.

What then is liberty? Is it doing just as we please or is it disciplining ourselves so that we please to do those things which make for liberty?

"Whose service is perfect freedom," seems to be a contradiction of terms to the irresponsible youth

who confidently expects that in order to have a good time one must always have one's way about everything.

It is because of this almost universal fallacy that educational institutions are little more than juvenile country clubs in which temporary amusement has crowded out the adequate mental training; and furthermore that American Christianity tries rather to please the people than to train a people who are pleasing to God.

And the product of American colleges and churches is best described in the words of the prophet as a "cake not turned," half baked, cooked on one side, and dough on the other, with no cohesion to hold it together, messy.

Men want freedom without training themselves to be free, whereas liberty is a condition of spiritual poise which takes more training to acquire than any other quality which man seeks. Men turn impatiently from training in order to be free, whereas they grow up merely uncontrolled.

What do Americans mean when they say that the Philippines are incapable of self-government, except this very thing, that they have never learned self-control?

There is only one way in which to govern people who lack self control and that is by the iron hand of law, externally applied.

And when this nation appeals, as it does, to legislative enactment for the control of citizens, it registers its conviction that its people are incapable of self-control,

Now Christ came to teach us self-control, not by the law but by the more gracious motive of human love; and when a man rejects Christ in the interests of self-determination, he invariably demonstrates his inability to control himself, and ends by becoming the slave of self instead of becoming the servant of Him, whose service is perfect freedom; and where do you find this freedom apart from Christ?

Human liberty did not exist on earth until Christ furnished the motive that produced it, and while tyrants have used the instruments which Christ furnished in order to keep men in subjection, yet we in America need not be afraid of such abuse, if we really want the liberty which Christ holds out to us.

For the kingdom of Heaven is at hand, and, if men really want the treasures of that kingdom, there is nothing to prevent their taking it by force, for the Christian Church is a democracy which can be seized by those who want the blessedness which Christ gives.

The reason why they do not want to seize the Church, is because they do not want the qualities which Christ practiced and taught. They prefer to substitute other movements in which enthusiasm can be evoked, without making any demand upon the individual to practice the piety which Christ demanded.

Men do not want to forgive their enemies; they do not want to pray for those who spitefully use them; they do not want to return good for evil; they do not want to seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and they neither believe in nor want "all those

things" which Christ promised "should be added unto them."

Oh yes! They want blessedness, but it is not the blessedness of spiritual victory. It is rather the blessedness of material prosperity which is sought alike by rich and poor; by the Wall Street bloc and the farmer bloc; by the standpatter and the socialist.

They all demand universal justice but are unwilling to practice the individual godliness by which alone that universal justice can be attained.

There has nothing occurred yet in the history of social welfare which makes me believe that there is any other way under Heaven by which men can attain to universal righteousness but "the way" which Christ walked, and that is the way of individually taking our cross and following Him as He walked. When men are willing to assume the discipline of the cross, they may hope to obtain the crown of glorious liberty, and in no other way.

That is why I am not interested in the various enthusiasms by which undisciplined souls are made to believe that they can obtain liberty and retain their unbridled license to hate and to envy and to cheat.

It is as the Rev. Mr. Knox has said, "enthusiasm without piety," and personal godliness is the only way in which glorious liberty can be acquired.

The effort to obtain the result without Christ's method is a travesty of justice and a perversion of liberty which invariably degenerates into chaos and tyranny.

The Church is the one institution in the world to-day which is even making the effort to make men

righteous, and the reason why the Church is so often perverted and so frequently despised, is not because the Church is incapable of producing righteous men.

The few men whom I have known who are cheerfully giving their lives to the service of their fellow men owe their inspiration for such service to Jesus Christ and to some influence that the Church in some form has had upon their lives.

The difficulty is not with the function of the Church. The difficulty is that so few men are willing to abandon their personal selfishness, and to put on worship as a garment, and to endure hardness as good soldiers, in order to create an atmosphere in which liberty, righteousness and justice is even a remote possibility.

Men despise the Church not because they are superior to its claims, but because they are unwilling to make the individual sacrifice to endure the inevitable discipline which Christ imposes on each disciple.

People hate the Church not because of its failure, but because of Christ's demands through it, upon what they are pleased to call their personal liberty.

Men do not want holiness; they want loot.

Men do not want God over them; they want their own way.

Men do not want the beatitudes of Christ; they want the luxuries of Croesus, and so the Church is despised, not for what she is, but for what she tries to make men to be.

Parson's Wives

IT WOULD be an ideal condition if there were enough young men, who had the dual vocation to be priests and celibates. But experience has taught mankind, that to enforce celibacy upon those who feel called to the ministry, is a dangerous plan for which society pays too great a price.

This Church has wisely determined that marriage is a sacramental relationship and in no way interferes with a man's priestly vocation.

It would be an ideal situation if we could train in similar seminaries, the young man who is going to be a priest, and the young woman who is going to be his wife; so that they could be equipped for the ordeal that awaits them, but this, unfortunately, is not practicable.

Young clergymen will insist upon selecting their own wives much as young doctors and lawyers insist.

Consequently clergymen's wives come from all sorts and conditions of families—from the daughter of the leading banker in a great metropolis to the daughter of the village blacksmith in the young clergyman's first cure. Why not?

She may be a young lady of education and refinement or she may be a peasant girl of grace and beauty or she may be a very homely, unattractive female. How can it be otherwise?

However, she has been married to her husband in a free country and according to the rites of religion.

Now begins a very curious experience. Were she to have married a lawyer or a doctor, she would have grown up in one circle which she would have graced or otherwise, and would have gone to her reward surrounded by life-long friends.

Not so with the minister's wife. She, wittingly or unwittingly, has entered upon a career for which she has had little or no preparation.

Her husband, being a man of ideals, feels that he should begin his ministry in a hard place, so he offers himself for the Mission field.

The little Mission has a small congregation which at once assumes a proprietorship in the minister and all that pertains unto him.

The wife senses the situation and learns to treat the feminine portion of the flock as one would treat a group of relatives among whom she is destined to live.

It is rather an informal relationship, for the village Church contains all sorts and conditions of folk and formal relations are hopeless.

The matrons of the Mission assume the same rights over the rectory that they would toward any of their poor relations who were dependent upon them, and are kindly if sometimes officious.

The other women act as an investigating committee and comment rather severely upon any failures to conform to their rather impossible standard of what a rector's wife should be.

Perhaps, however, she adjusts herself to the situation and keeps up a good appearance on a minimum salary and a maximum of hospitality.

Then comes a change. Her husband has been called to a rather good parish in a select neighborhood of cultivated and well-to-do people. In the goodness of their hearts they offer to pay the moving expenses.

The young couple move into the handsome rectory with their meager furniture, healthy babies and a balance of thirty dollars in the bank.

The scene shifts. The new parishioners are proud of their new rector's abilities, and the couple are invited to formal dinners and are expected to attend social functions. In what? The young wife is rather dismayed. What shall she do? Involve her husband heavily in debt or go in the clothes of her previous social requirements.

Which should she do? The probabilities are that one will do one, and the other will do the other; and in either case the fiddler will have to be paid.

Christian women should be considerate and kindly folk, but, when the clergyman's wife is concerned, they are apt to regard her as the scapegoat whom the Lord has provided for the sacrifice. So they get out their knives and their scissors. Poor woman! She is between two evils. If she chooses the one, her husband will be looked upon as one who does not pay his bills, and if she choose the other, she will be regarded as a social liability for whom the select parishioners must apologize.

The rector of one of our outstanding parishes told me that in each of three successive parishes his wife had been let alone for two years, until her sterling qualities commanded respect.

First they had been received gladly; then they had

been ignored socially; then they had been accepted willingly.

Now these people were solid, substantial people, who felt that they would not pretend that for which they could not pay. Well, time goes on and promotion comes. This time to a large parish in a great city. The family wardrobe has been brought up to a modest standard, but from a select parish of two hundred people, they are now confronted by a communicant list of 1,000, and in three months the rector's wife who has three or four children, one servant and no automobile, is confronted with the fact that there are four hundred visiting cards in the card basket. These calls she is told must be returned. Heaven help her.

Did you ever try to make four hundred calls in one season? That would be thirty calls a week for fourteen consecutive weeks.

And what happens? Of course it cannot be done.

Do considerate parishioners send around a machine by which she can accomplish this miracle?

Or if her husband owns a flivver, can he give up his work and drive his wife around? Or shall they make semi-parochial and semi-social calls together? Heaven forbid.

Is she forgiven if she leaves out anybody in her daily ministrations?

Here is the strange thing in a Christian congregation. The clergyman's wife is not forgiven.

I have known several instances when the minister's wife has been snubbed for years because of

some failure to observe social ritual or to exercise unusual diplomacy in a trying situation.

One hesitates to carry this case to the supreme court and discourse upon the wives of bishops. It seems so personal and yet something needs to be said in a general way.

Let us hope before our young rector has been elevated to the Episcopate, that he and his wife have become used to the unreasonable demands made upon them by their constituency.

For now the clergyman and his wife must be separated. It is true that it is not a legal separation but rather a practical one.

He must leave his wife and children to the tender mercies of his constituents while he goes a-traveling.

Now his constituency has grown to several thousands and the time when he is at home is reduced to an irreducible minimum.

There are certain questions which arise in one's mind as he is confronted with the problem of his social relations.

Shall he become a member of a caste and identify himself with that most delightful group who play the game of life according to certain well-defined rules of compensation? It would be nice.

Should a bishop consume the few days when he is at home in returning certain social obligations?

Should his wife be expected to return all calls?

At first instance one might say of course.

But stop and think a moment.

The President of the United States or the Gov-

ernor of a State are officers who are not expected to return calls.

Why not? Because it is manifestly impossible. One would think that Christian courtesy would be as considerate as secular common sense.

There is a parable of our Lord's in which he deals with this matter of social compensations.

"When thou makest a feast—call the poor and the maimed, the halt and the blind—for they cannot recompense thee."

Would that the clergy might be included in this group—as well in the obligations of society, as in the estimation of successful business men.

If one is to observe all the rules laid down by all the groups, from whom he receives many courtesies, then let us inaugurate a new order of deacons and deaconesses to discharge these rules in order that the shepherds may give themselves to the word of God and to prayer.

I do not think that Christian people are intentionally malicious, but I do think that they are frequently very inconsiderate.

Each family in a given city moves in a delightful circle of from five to fifty families, according to their taste and leisure. And as a rule it is very loathe to add to this list, until it becomes too formidable. "I have all the friends that I can carry now," said one fine woman to me when I asked her to cultivate a lonely woman. And she was right in her way.

But a pastor has from fifty to a thousand families who are equally in the circle of his friendship.

What is he to do? Repay all social obligations, or shut himself up with a delightful circle of intimate friends?

I wonder how much of the frequent unpopularity of bishops in their own dioceses is due to the fact that people are demanding from them, the observance of the same rule as that which governs a private citizen who can limit his clientele to his strength and ability.

Most of these bishops have been very popular as rectors, and many of them would gladly return to the genial atmosphere of their old parishes if they could.

Usually their wives had adapted themselves to the hospitable friends whom they have left, they come to a strange city and find themselves in a different surrounding.

They want to be natural and they are expected to be conventional; or they want to be conventional and are expected to be natural; for they no longer are in touch with a mere parochial set, but with all sorts and conditions who have an equal claim upon them.

Let me close with a few elementary rules:

(1) Take it for granted that the clergyman's wife is a Christian lady living in a free land, entitled to her own peculiarities and limited by the family income.

(2) Do not expect the wives of clerics to observe those social obligations (which you yourselves limit severely to a particular set) which they cannot limit in fairness to all.

They ought not be expected to repay calls or to return the lavish entertainment which they receive, if for no other reason, because of the large number of those to whom they are obligated and the small income that they have to dispense.

The hospitality of the clergy should be for the poor and not "for those who can recompense them again."

(3) Do not fault a priest or his wife if they either are ignorant of, or unwilling to give the time and attention to, the requirements of society which are expensive in time or money.

If you give your rector a generous salary, do not expect to have him give it back to you in expensive entertainment, but rather encourage him to spend it on the poor, for this is Christian, and will have a bearing upon his spiritual influence.

(4) Do not hold a clergyman or his wife responsible for social calls in return for yours.

Of course a clergyman might pick out the important people to recognize, but, if he did, he would be neglecting those who have a better claim upon his time and generosity, and would not be following His Master.

It is very hard for a pastor to live up to what the world expects of him. He and his wife are conscientious people, and if you would be helpful to his ministry, be kindly to his wife and her limitations, for, after all, they are the same as your own.

A Gentleman's Game

GOLF is a gentleman's game for, in golf, each man is trusted to keep his own score, is not watched as to whether he keeps the rules, and is so full of provocations from start to finish that it tests all one's reserve powers to self-control to keep smiling.

Of course the demon of commercialism invades the golf course as it invades the sacred relations of host and guest in the home, and as it invades religion. Those who must introduce a monetary consideration into friendly games pay the penalty of turning recreation into a business.

Playing a game for money or things is an abomination of social intercourse.

We cannot let the mammon of unrighteousness alone, not even in our sports or in our homes. There ought to be an inviolate custom that the man who introduces monetary considerations into the games of friendship, should be sentenced to hard labor in a bank until he becomes sick of the sight of money.

But golf in itself is pure from this offense. And the man who commercializes the game becomes a professional, that is, he makes it a business.

Why a professional is debarred from amateur contests because he makes a living by it, and the man who plays for a stake is not so debarred I do not know. Seems to me the latter does more to ruin the game than the former.

I like to think of religion as a gentleman's game

rather than to think of it as a business. St. Paul thinks of it in both relationships. He talks religion in the language of the arena.

"So fight I not as one that beateth the air,"

"So run that ye may obtain,"

"Let us press toward the goal for the prize."

He also speaks of religion as a vocation or as a business, but perhaps in his day business had not developed into such a hard mechanical process as it is today.

At any rate I prefer to think of religion as a gentleman's game in which God prefers us to keep our own score without being watched; and in which God lets us play our ball in accordance with our own conscience; and in which God expects us to be cheerful in whatever trouble we may find ourselves. After all, that is the sportsmanlike way to play the game of life.

Now keeping one's own score is simply a matter of truthfulness. It is the one, two, three of golf and of life.

There are players whose wish is father to the thought, and who persist in forgetting some bad strokes in order to make it appear that they have played the game more correctly than they have.

It is rather hard to be truthful with one's self. "To thine own self be true" is easier said than done.

To keep the truthful score of all the dub shots that we make in life and to confess them willingly is not easy. We prefer to do like a certain player who was playing recently in a contest and whose stroke was so bad as he neared the end that he tore up the score

card rather than be humiliated by the miserable score that he had made.

So many people in life either do not keep score, or as they near the end of life, they petulantly tear up their score card.

The game of life demands truthfulness without evasion and without deception.

After all life is a gentleman's game in which a good conscience is better than a fine score. For the man who gets a poor score gets as much exercise and nearly as much real benefit as the man who plays in par. And as we play golf for exercise rather than the score, so we play the game of life for the training of the soul rather than for its record. A part of that training is that a man shall learn to be strictly honest with himself and as courteously lenient to the other player as the rules of the game will permit.

The game of life has its rules. The Ten Commandments of Moses, including the worship of God and purity toward your neighbor's wife as well as your own. The two greater commandments that we love God and love our neighbor so that we need not think of printed rules as we play, because we have caught the spirit of the game and so have learned its rules.

The Commandments of the Christ: "Repent ye!" "Do this!" "Go ye!" and all that obedience involves.

It is a gentleman's game and so we accept the rules and do not attempt to manufacture rules to suit ourselves.

Neither when our ball has a bad lie, do we attempt to change the rules to suit our ball, neither do we

move the ball with our toe in order that we may make a better score. We may be in the bunker of sickness, or poverty, or injustice. We may be confronted with the hazard of suspicion or misunderstanding or contempt. We may find ourselves well off the fair-way in the rough of circumstances or accident or design.

All right! There are rules which the Master has laid down for human conduct and we do not seek to reshape religion to suit our unfortunate lie, but on the contrary we play the ball as best we can. Undoubtedly you are in difficulty. Most of us are from time to time.

What are you going to do about it? There is but one thing to do, and that is to play the game according to the rules.

Perhaps you have made an unfortunate marriage, have become involved with a disagreeable partner, find yourself in an unpleasant parochial atmosphere, or in uncomfortable social relations. What about it? So many think that they have solved the difficulty by picking up their ball and going home.

America is becoming a nation of moral cowards, as Mr. Emerson Hough has publicly said, because Americans fancy that they can ignore the rules which Christ has laid down for the game of life. Play your ball where it lies and face the issue at no matter what cost to yourself.

The cowardly whine which sends people to the divorce court and keeps them away from church for petty reasons, or causes them to found a new religion because they fancy the old religion does not fit their

particular case is not the way in which the game of life will be won.

Life, like golf, is purposely made hard. It may seem silly to some people that men build bunkers and hazards on golf courses in order to make the game more difficult, but it is only a difficult game that provokes an adventurous spirit and makes the game worth playing.

There are religions today which claim to smooth out all the hazards in life. When they have succeeded in doing so, life will become a mere bovine existence.

Every difficulty, every obstacle in life is a challenge to sportsmanship.

Every time we pick up our ball because of the challenge, we join the ranks of quitters. Provocations are the order of the day, but the seasoned player does not lose his temper and complain of fate because life is provoking. Rather, he selects the club which will best meet the difficulty and plays as best he can, more concerned that he be a sportsman than about the score.

Golf has been facetiously described as the game of putting a small ball into a small hole with instruments very ill adapted to the purpose.

This isn't a bad definition of life. The small ball is myself and the small hole is the place that I am to occupy in life and the instruments are such as God has devised.

Nor am I so much concerned about the score as I am about the sportsmanlike way in which I handle those instruments.

I wish more people would look at life as a gentleman's game rather than as a hectic performance in which they sit on the bleachers and criticize the little group who are trying to play the game. It is all right to help from the gallery on certain occasions, but to sit in the bleachers is not exercise, nor does it seem quite fair that those who are experiencing none of the difficulties should furnish so much of the criticism. And I believe that all such will pay the penalty of their officiousness.

Entangling Alliances

THE Christian religion has been the most powerful force in leavening human society. But the grace of God, working through Christ and His Church, has not always been equally potent in its effect on society. This influence has been carried on through various instruments, in which human personality and external machinery have been important factors in determining the power of God in human affairs.

Under certain conditions the Church has been powerful for good; under other conditions it has seemed to co-operate with the world, the flesh and the Devil to injure the work that it has done.

This is not remarkable because all powerful forces when misapplied are as injurious as they are beneficial when rightly handled.

There is no more beneficent force than electricity, but if you handle it in the wrong way you will be electrocuted instead of being illuminated.

The very speed by which a railroad train carries you to your destination will be a contributing force to your destruction if the train leaves the rails.

I believe that the same thing is true of religion, and I believe that the Master pointed out this fact most clearly.

He discriminated courageously between a wrong religion and a right religion. If your righteousness was that of the Scribes and Pharisees it wouldn't take you where you hoped to go.

One of the embarrassing features of our modern situation is that any group of people who claim the stamp of Christian can be guilty of all that the Pharisees did, and yet be included, under our loose form of thinking, as a part of the Christian Church in good standing.

The public, looking at the Federation of Churches as Christianity, will make its deductions from the worst, rather than the best representatives and accuse the whole body of Christians of being sponsor for the tactics of an irresponsible group. And this situation is the more deplorable when you consider that there is no pettiness as small as religious pettiness and no bitterness as mean as religious bitterness.

The very fact that religion is a powerful force makes the distortion of religion the more destructive.

We are so sentimentally attached to the idea of Christian courtesy that it is bad form even to point out Pharisaism, although it is as strongly entrenched today as it was in the days of the apostles.

Our Lord did not hesitate to condemn it; St. Paul called it by its right name; where it exists today in our own Church we do not hesitate to condemn it; but because we have entered into an *entente cordial* with all sorts and kinds of religious bodies, we must not observe this flagrant perversion of Christ's gospel in other religious bodies.

Moreover, there are religious bodies in this country which play the game of inter-church relations in various sections of the country with an unfairness

which if practiced among pagans in a golf tournament would debar them from the course forever.

Again we are confronted with a situation in which the Church is prevented from protest by its entangling alliances.

The same persons who would vigorously protest against financial trickery and be sustained by the public do not dare protest at the most flagrant violations of courtesy and fairness because the fact that they are done by a Christian denomination makes their acts sacrosanct. No matter how unfair the particular deceit; no matter how regardless of morals a Christian denomination may be, they can get away with it, because to speak of it would be a violation of interdenominational courtesy.

Any amount of official Pharisaism can go unrebuked under this allied banner which has been raised over all, and which shields alike the innocent and the guilty.

If there is one thing which was fought out by the apostles to a successful issue it was the battle against legalism. "The law came by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."

And the law brought no one to perfection. Yet the crusade of Pan-Protestantism today is one of securing civic righteousness by legislative enactment.

For anyone to assert the fact that it is no part of the Christian gospel to appeal unto Caesar for legal process in making men righteous is to bring out a fusillade of malice, bitterness and all uncharitableness.

I am not discussing the issue of law enforcement

as a civic duty. I acknowledge it cheerfully. I merely assert that the ministers of Christ are not moral policemen, but rather are sent to win the sinner to Christ. And the whole tirade of Christian ministers against sinners of the flesh has no warrant in any language which Christ ever used in the premises.

It is most humiliating to feel that one is part and parcel with a large group of ministers who set forth the moral value of a state legislature as overruling the law of Christ in the matter of marriage and divorce. It must cause one to repudiate any official identification with ecclesiastical organizations which wink at the enormity of this vice.

I do not feel that there is any such theological gulf between myself and our allied Christians as to be impassable. Nor am I so much concerned with the matter of Apostolic Succession or some other kind which is non-apostolic.

My difficulty in throwing myself into the popular current toward closer official affiliation with all sorts and conditions of Christians lies in the fact that I cannot accept the moral standards which they set forth as the Gospel of Christ.

Nor is it that I feel any moral superiority. It is rather that our standards are different. Probably they would claim that theirs are better. But of one thing I am certain and that is that the Mosaic law cannot be a substitute for the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, no matter how much it may be amended.

It may be that they live up to their standards bet-

ter than I live up to mine. That is not the question either. The question is a deeper one.

It is the old fight between a Pharisaic standard of Christian morals, however ideally it may be carried out, and the standards set by Christ, no matter how difficult they may be of realization.

Christ did not scold drunkards or harlots, but won them by patient ministrations to their spiritual needs. Christ did not invoke either Caesar or the Sanhedrin to aid Him in putting over a moral crusade against the sins of the flesh.

Christ did repudiate legalism and practiced kindness toward sinners.

Personally, I believe that the moral ideals of the Church, however badly we may carry them out as individuals, are the ideals of the Master, and personally I believe that the whole Christian population is deeply infected with a secularized Christ who exists rather to make this world prosperous than it does to make sinners feel that they are sons of God.

From the days of the Protestant reformation the idea was lost and intellectual curiosity about God and spiritual things took the place of fellowship at a common altar.

All this fussing about the creeds is due largely to the fact that we are more concerned with the intellectual side of religion than we are concerned with putting on Christ in worship and service. We regard Christ too much as a teacher come from God; too little as the source of grace in the conquest of our own selfishness.

We cannot form an alliance on ideas without losing

the only true unity which is inseparable with the common baptism, common communion and common fellowship of the household of faith.

The only kind of Christianity which will ever profoundly influence human society toward righteousness is one which manifests that rare combination of definite conviction and kindly courtesy. The two are not interchangeable, but complementary.

Without definite convictions religion has no force; without Christian courtesy it has no attractiveness. One need not lack the latter because he possesses the former.

A Token of His Love

IT SEEMS a pity that theological controversy should have raged around that which our Blessed Lord intended should be the center of friendship and the inspiration to Christian hospitality.

It does not speak well for us human-kind that we quarrel chiefly over that which our Master intended should be the sacrament of fellowship.

We must be a contentious, quarrelsome lot if we cannot live and let live in that which recalls to us that He died for us and that which reminds us that His greatest concern was that we should be one body with Him.

I know that people blame "the Church" for the sins of the race, but I wonder if God will not judge us all, Churchmen and non-Churchmen alike, for our attitude toward the Church, just as I fancy He judged all men for their attitude toward His beloved Son.

The Church is not a "person who is a sinner," but we are sinners whether we misrepresent the Church to which we belong or censor the Church to which we do not belong. For Christ died for us and gave us the Church to be our bond of fellowship, and all are guilty who fail to measure up to His standard, whether we misrepresent the Church, reject it or abuse it.

How keen we are to attach blame to someone else, when we ourselves are really not able to appreciate and use the instruments which the love of Christ has provided for us.

Let us take the Lord's Supper out of the sphere of theological controversy and look at it solely from the standpoint of affectionate loyalty.

What did Jesus institute it for?

What does it mean to you?

What has it meant to me, who have received it nearly every Sunday for more than thirty years?

Let us not try to solve the mystery, but rather let us understand the love behind it.

It was the night of His betrayal, and, in the Jewish Calendar, the day of His passion.

He loved His own dearly and proposed to leave them under the most harrowing circumstances.

His intensely human love for His children prompted Him to establish with them a perpetual point of contact.

Is not this exactly what we humans try to do when our loved ones leave us?

We are not satisfied with the merely spiritual contact of memory or thought; we want some tangible contact with our own.

When they are gone, we write to them, or wire them, or call them on long distance phone.

We enjoy the kodak picture which they send us.

We cherish their gifts for the remembrance that they involve.

We welcome them with a kiss and an embrace when they return.

It is not enough for human contact that we be satisfied with a mild platonic interest; we want a vivid physical touch, because we are human.

Christ was intensely human. "The Word became

flesh and dwelt among us." Neither did He seek to divest Himself of the physical by seeking the Nirvana of abstract thought.

As He went about among men, He touched those whom he loved and healed; He wept over the afflictions of those whom He loved; He broke bread with His intimate friends; He suffered Himself in the flesh and as He suffered was comforted by the one whom He loved, who leaned upon His breast.

Why this attempt to dehumanize Christ? He did not deny nor evade the physical; He consecrated His body to pure acts of love.

Think then of the Lord's Supper not as a mysterious something which you dread, but rather as a human something which His love provided for your need; which His voice bade you to observe; which His care for you provided as your comfort and solace.

And if His graciousness awakens in you any tenderness, any love, any desire, then tell me, how can His last request be a matter of cold indifference to you unless you are incapable of responding to His love?

God so loved you that He gave: Christ so loved you that He gave Himself; and as He gave Himself for you, He bade you, "Do this in memory of Me." In doing this you give yourself in order to show forth His death until He come.

Christ came, I am sure, not to satisfy the curiosity of intellectuals, but to meet the needs of a humble folk, for as His mother said: "He puts down the mighty from their seats and exalts the humble and the meek."

It is a homely thing that Christ bids you sup with Him, but it is the most human thing in all the world.

It is human contact with His own.

Moreover, does it mean anything to you that for nineteen centuries, amid all of the selfishness, sensuality and cruelty of this wicked world, in all these centuries, little groups of faithful people, loving their Master, have continuously gathered on the first day of the week to break bread with Him.

Would it have been the same; would love have persisted so continuously; would men have held together so compactly in His fellowship; if these same souls had merely had a thought about God or an emotion concerning God or even a silent prayer to God?

Was it not the fellowship of Christians in Christ at His altar that kept together the faithful in all the trials and tragedies of history?

In short, can human beings who seek actual contact with their beloved, be satisfied in their contact with the human Christ, unless they are eager to make that particular contact to which His love has invited them—He bade us to do this.

Does not the prayer of humble access express most beautifully the need of human affection when it says "Grant that we may so eat the flesh of Thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and drink His blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by His body and our souls washed by His most precious blood and that we may evermore dwell in Him and He in us."

Would we care who else might kneel beside us, be he hypocrite or sinner, providing we may touch Him, if we really love Him as He loves us?

Would he reject us because the man beside us was a brute?

Why then are we so captious unless we seek an excuse to withhold the devotion that His love invites?

Do you not stay away because your love is cold?

And it is just this touch that we need to have in America. Some physical contact which is not debasing. A pure love that is not stained with impure passion.

He drew men to Him with the word of His mouth and the touch of His hand.

Those who loved Him touched the hem of His garment; washed His feet with tears and wiped them with hairs of the head; broke alabaster boxes of ointment on His body and He approved, because He knew that, even in the woman stained with lust, there was holy affection in the act. "Because she loved much, she was forgiven much."

How often have you learned to love those whom you had not met before in the breaking of bread in your own household?

The Lord's Supper is the sacrament of human affection, of Christian fellowship, of Christ's hospitality.

The large wafer consecrated by the priest has been well named the "Host," because Christ is in truth a host in the Lord's Supper.

The season of greatest human hospitality has been well named from Christ's Mass—Christmastide.

"Why do you walk and are sad?" said the Master as the two disciples walked toward Emmaus. Well might He ask the same question of those today whose

lives are sad as they walk toward their destination.

They told him then of their disappointment in their hopes of the Christ, "Whom they had trusted would redeem Israel." So men have turned away from a Christ whom they have never really understood, because they merely thought or talked about Him.

"And it came to pass, as He sat at meat with them, He took bread and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened and they knew Him, and He vanished out of their sight."

Gone was He, but they had seen Him and known Him, if only for the moment in the breaking of bread.

"And they said one to another, "Did not our hearts burn within us?"

It is just this intimate, instant touch that the Lord's Supper provides for those who plod along the dreary way.

It is just this, that the weekly reception of the Lord's Supper has meant to me, as I look back on thirty years of service at the altar.

Once a week, at least, I have dwelt in Him and He in me.

What more is there in any embrace or in any intimate touch which we have with a friend?

Just touch the hand or lips and we pass on, but the way is no longer dreary and one is no longer weary, for we have been with Him.

Make the Lord's Supper the time, the place, and the occasion when in the early morning you spend one-half hour with Christ.

Rudeness to Christ

THE glory of the Gospel is that it reveals a personal God who, through His only begotten Son, calls us to be His children, and, except we are willing to become as children in our relationship with Him, we cannot become members of His household. It should be the concern of parents that their children have good manners.

It may not be altogether true that "manners maketh man," but it is unquestionably true that nothing differentiates the attractive from the unattractive child as good manners. God may love an ill-mannered child but He cannot admire him.

Somebody has well said that our religion is the 'practice of the presence of God,' so that our whole life is lived as though, "Thou God seest me" (at all times and under all circumstances) becomes the greatest factor in our daily life.

It is this principle that lies at the basis of our Lord's Real Presence in the Holy Eucharist. Of course He is present there, for He is always present wherever we are, and so He could not be absent at the time which He appointed for our worship and remembrance of His love.

Surely no one who believes in God's constant presence in our lives could dare affirm that He absented Himself at this most sacred hour, but rather would be present in the most intimate and personal relationship.

Just as our earthly father might be present with

us all day at the workshop, but would be more intimately present in a conference at which we might discuss affectionately matters of intensely personal concern.

The Lord's Supper is just such an intimately personal relationship which Christ has established that "He might dwell in us and we in Him."

But mere intimacy without reverence and without good manners will in the end breed contempt.

That is why so many ecclesiastics are rather hard-boiled in the matter of delicacy in manners toward God, and it is for the same reason that many cultured people have bad manners in Church.

If Church is the place where we come in most intimate relationship to our Heavenly Father, then it is there that we ought to cultivate courtly manners, even more than in the drawing rooms of mere people who have little transitory importance.

And so as we enter God's House we should do so conscious that "the Lord is in His Holy Temple."

If we are really conscious of this we will not enter the Church late, for while being late on occasion may be a necessity, being late as a habit is certainly rudeness.

There are parishes in which half the congregation is habitually late. There is no apology for this but indifference and indolence, otherwise rudeness.

As we enter God's House we should enter it with the same consciousness of God's honor as the rules of court procedure require that you approach the person of the earthly king who represents merely the majesty of his kingdom.

Easy familiarity with God in public worship is a sign that one is utterly lacking in appreciation of the wide difference in dignity between the creature and the Creator; the subject and the King; the Son and the Father of us all.

The cheap familiarity that characterizes much public worship in America is responsible for the lack of reverence which is the great blot on juvenile character.

Where can there be any reverence if there is none in the House of God?

Moreover in the communion service the Church has seen fit to require that one who proposes to receive shall confess his sins and be forgiven before he presumes to eat of that bread and drink of that cup.

The easy familiarity with which people approach the sacrament, who have entered the Church after the absolution, is contrary not only to good manners but to personal humility.

There is a lack of reality in the whole magnificent service if we thus minimize the vital importance of each vital act.

In the same way the frequent habit of leaving the Church after the sermon, after the prayer for the Church Militant, or, having received, to leave before the thanksgiving or before the blessing, gives the same impression that would be given to your host, if after the meat course, you pushed back your chair, saying "I do not care for salad or dessert and so I am going home."

What are the extraordinary engagements that

cause people to hurry away from Church before the service is completed? We can sympathize with meek housewives who have husbands that are merely alimentary canals, surrounded by flesh; but the American habit of escaping the blessing may be the cause why the lives of the unblessed are so lacking in blessing.

It would seem as though God's blessing was one of the chief things for which men ought to go to Church. To turn one's back upon it without grave necessity and humble apology to God is an insinuation that His blessing is not worth waiting for. Nobody could repeatedly do this thing without being rude to God.

Of course there is a great company of independent thinkers who do not esteem these things as being of vital importance, but that is merely because they have an exaggerated sense of their own importance and a very imperfect idea of the tremendous significance of God's presence in His sanctuary.

To leave the service which our Lord instituted before it is completed is to do as Judas did whose mind was so intent on the thirty pieces of silver that he forgot his manners.

It is a poor precedent for Church people to follow.

It is not only rude but it destroys the beauty of the service.

Some clergy mangle the service by mumbling it and think that they are doing God service. Why anyone should think that an indistinct utterance confers distinction on the priest or gives glory to God is more than my poor brain has ever been able to fathom.

We are in Church to honor God, not to insult Him, for He is a person who in the person of His dear Son was most gracious to us. We can at least be gracious to Him.

We do not do honor to Christ by murdering the service.

But the laity can be guilty of equal rudeness, when in criticizing the habit of the clergy, they commit unspeakable rudeness in their mangling of the continuity and beauty of the service by their original entrances and exits.

Having been given the power of speech with which to glorify God, men stand like wooden images during the hymns and psalter, giving neither interest nor praise.

Having been given a body which they decorate most elaborately and feed most bountifully, they refuse to offer their bodies to God in the posture of Christian convention, but substitute for it an attitude neither giving glory to God nor grace to their own bodies.

Having been given much of this world's goods they glorify God by giving Him as an offering on His altar about the same sum, sometimes not so much, as they bestow with princely *largesse* in tips upon their servants. What we need in worship is to visualize the reality of it all, that Christ has invited us to be His friends; that God has asked us to be His Sons; that we, each of us, should be joyous in conducting ourselves as a child of the King.

PART IV

THE CHRISTIAN YEAR

The Advent Call

ON Advent Sunday we hit the trail for another year of Christian training.

On the Sunday before Advent we pray God to "stir up the wills of faithful people" that they may "plenteously bring forth the fruit of good works."

Stir up Sunday is a call for volunteers who will go into training for the vocation to which they are called.

There is something about training that is extremely distasteful to those who put self-indulgence first and who do not care enough for the game to put themselves to the personal inconvenience of training.

If St. Paul had seen a modern football team, trained to take any amount of gruelling punishment and trained further to go through the other line for substantial gains and the final touchdown, I have no doubt he would have had the same reaction as he had when he saw the athletic contests in the Corinthian arena.

"I punish my body and keep it in subjection lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."

He would have seen in the football contest the effect of careful training.

It is the well trained athlete who can execute the intricacies of a difficult play and see it through.

It is the poorly trained athlete who has to be taken out of the game because he is completely exhausted.

Football is largely a matter of careful training and

no one can hope to play the game well unless he is willing to take the training.

No amount of ability or strength can be effective until it has been trained to do its share in the team work which wins the victory, but as St. Paul says, "They do it to obtain a corruptible crown and we do it to obtain an incorruptible one."

The man who would win his victory over the forces of evil must first be willing to gain the victory over himself.

The most apparent weakness of the American people is their futile confidence that they can win spiritual victories without training.

For this reason we are forever starting things which we do not finish.

It is not at all difficult for the optimistic cheer leader to imagine victories and to plan campaigns on paper, but it is only when that optimism is backed by a well trained team that imagination can become reality.

It is all right to hear inspirational leaders and they contribute mightily to the success of the team, but when these same inspirational enthusiastic conferences and eloquent cheers are substitutes for conscientious training and practiced plays, they miss the mark inevitably.

It is an interesting but fatuous process to mark the successive laymen's movements and interdenominational campaigns that have been started enthusiastically by men of unusual personal force; then committed to local committees who meet and pass

resolutions; and then entrusted to callow secretaries who persuade themselves that their cause is mighty by the extravagant way in which they spend money to further the same.

Of course such a team never makes a touchdown, because the vagueness of the plans is exceeded only by the incapacity of the players.

It is characteristic of American religious enthusiasm that it wishes to grab the prize without pressing toward the goal.

The Episcopal Church is awfully slow. We concede it. Most of the enthusiastic people seem to prefer to follow the cheer leaders than to go into training.

Consequently our team lacks enthusiasm and their teams lack training.

Men want to get rich quickly and to get healed quickly and to get salvation quickly, and we are in the exact frame of mind to be humbugged quickly in all these enterprises.

The blue sky is the only limit to their expectations, while most of those expectations land in the cemetery.

Our religion in America lacks staying qualities. We want to "march to Zion, the blessed city of God," on our enthusiasm.

Consequently most of our players have to be taken out of the line long before the whistle blows.

We hate the tedious monotony of adequate training.

Given in a loud voice, some glittering generalities,

the language of the street and a crowded tabernacle, and the devil is whipped already.

As a matter of fact he is about as scared as a well trained varsity team would be scared by the noise and enthusiasm of an ill trained high school team.

It is about time the American people learned that these methods are ineffective.

The more instantaneous the method of making saints, the less effective is the nation in establishing righteousness.

The more noisy the salvation, the less ethical the results.

Not that noise is wicked nor that it is wholly ineffective, but that mere noise without training will never reach the goal.

"Leaving those things that are behind let us press toward the goal for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

These cheer leaders have mixed up the goal and the prize most woefully.

They want to seize the prize (salvation) without ever reaching the goal (which is the righteousness of Jesus Christ).

"Until we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

But the Church still invites us to go into training, to gradually learn what is the unity of faith and to slowly acquire the knowledge of the Son of God in order that if possible we may attain our goal.

In order to make this training effective the Church has set forth a Church year in which we may ground ourselves in the knowledge of our faith.

Let us approach these various seasons with this intention, that we shall learn the lesson of each season so that we may have a knowledge of the Son of God and that we will take our place on the team and do our stunt faithfully in order that we may practice the unity of the faith.

Christmas Observance

THE one factor which has leavened the cruelty of a pagan world has been the life of Christ.

I care not whether you go back to the ancient paganism of Egypt and Assyria; of Greece and Rome; or contemplate either Cathay or the Levant; or study the Reign of Terror in France or Russia, you are forced to conclude that the natural man is cruel and has little sympathy with suffering.

Christ came into a drab and desolate world with His personal message of "Glory to God and Peace on Earth," and wherever mankind has accepted Christ's standards they have been transformed by His marvelous personality.

His severity toward human error caused Him to be crucified, but His love for human souls caused Him to be adored by those who loved righteousness and hated iniquity.

It was the personal Jesus who touched the needs of men—so that in seeing Him they saw the Father.

Men who could not define Him, loved Him passionately.

Now men who are incapable of loving Him define Him learnedly.

They learned to love Him as their Savior, and so came to worship Him as God.

The religion of the primitive Church was the passionate love for the God-man, which was willing to make any sacrifice in the expression of that love.

We have substituted a definition of God for this personal motive.

The love of Christ constrained them to deeds of service, whereas the love of self restrains us from much real sacrifice in His name.

This is at no time more evident than at Christmas.

Our Christian Christmas is about as pagan an institution as one could devise.

We certainly accommodate God to circumstances at this season which is supposed to commemorate a person who died for us, and which we use to stimulate trade and gratify society.

How can a Christian pretend to keep Christmas and leave Christ out?

And how else can we put Christ in unless we do the thing that He commanded us to do?

The very name of Christmas involves Christ's Mass, and even if we put the Lord's Supper on the very lowest level of observance, it was the thing that He asked us to do in memory of Him, and when should one do a memorial act for one whom he reveres unless we do it on the day which marks His birth?

To pretend to observe Christmas and to ignore Christ is to be guilty of a personal insult to His memory.

What is Christmas in Christian America today?

Is it a memorial to Christ or is it merely an opportunity to enjoy ourselves? Or worse still, to use Him for the loaves and fishes?

There is no more room for Him in the inn today than there was in Bethlehem.

Christmas has become so secularized and diverted from its original purpose that people are too tired to meet Him at the Altar.

Or we have so many social engagements planned and so many friends to entertain that we forget the Christ in our multitudinous activities.

And we give our Christian gifts today not in His name but in the name of some club or organized charity that is in no way related to Him.

It was His wish that the smallest gifts should be given to His name.

Now "for fear of the Jews," we throw our Christmas offerings into a common fund from which His name has been studiously delected, and we sacrifice His memory to prudence.

Christmas comes and we are either too tired to worship Christ or too busy to worship Christ or too timid to worship Christ.

In short we are so worldly that we keep Christmas with Christ left out and we do it because we do not really believe in a personal living Christ at God's right hand.

If we really believed in a living Christ we could not be guilty of such a breach of good manners as to keep His birthday without Him any more than we would observe the President's birthday (if he were the head of our family) without any personal recognition such as we might imagine he would appreciate.

After all isn't an impersonal God merely a creature of our own imagination, made at home so that we can control his domination?

We are indolent and do not wish to worship, so we manufacture a God who does not require it.

We are self willed and do not wish to obey so we create a God who obeys us.

We are selfish and do not wish to give, so we create a God who does not desire our liberality.

A Christless Christmas is a travesty.

It would seem incumbent for a Christian on Christmas Day to raise early.

Let us go to Bethlehem and see this wondrous thing that has come to pass.

We have more cause to rejoice than those poor shepherds who knew merely the Christ of prophecy, while we know the Christ of history—a Christ far more wonderful than even the Christ in Galilee for there He gave no other evidence of His power than His goodness and His good works, but we know Him as the power of righteousness for nineteen centuries.

It is Christ who has overcome the world so that a man may be righteous without being crucified, and a man may have liberty without being tortured.

Ingratitude is the worst of vices, and to be so ungrateful as not to keep the festal day of our Savior is to betray our ingratitude to Him.

Surely the world needs nothing more than it needs a Christian Christmas—a Christmas in which Christ is with us in a real and personal way, and not merely as the one who stimulates trade and makes it possible for us to have a good time.

Christmas Peace

IN HIS little book on "The Psychology of Insanity," Dr. Hart relates an incident. A certain man complained bitterly that a certain peal of chimes was discordant and irritating.

As a matter of fact, the chimes were in perfect tune and were particularly sweet.

The man had a complex which perverted him so that he called good, evil, and harmony discord.

Why was that? Because he disliked the clergyman in whose church the chimes were hung; therefore, he disliked the chimes.

A little root of bitterness had so spread that it enveloped his whole being and everything was colored by this prejudice.

So, you will find a large proportion of the human race infected with incipient madness.

Their judgment is perverted by their complexes of human prejudice. You will find Republicans and Democrats alike who refuse to acknowledge that any one in the opposite party has any virtue. You will find financiers and laborers who have a similar complex.

So, Protestant and Catholic are unable to see good in any act pertaining to the other faction.

Such complexes are substitutes for reason and destitute of charity.

Those who hold them frequently think that they do so in the name of the Lord, but there is nothing to justify this assumption.

It was the Pharisee and not the Christ who was the victim of these complexes.

It was the Pharisee who felt such contempt for the Samaritan, who was the heretic of his day.

Christ saw whatever was good in the Samaritan without compromising his heresy.

"Ye worship ye know not what," was His declaration about the religion of the Samaritan, but in several instances He spoke approvingly of good Samaritans.

To the Pharisee there were no good Samaritans. His complex would not admit it.

To the Pharisee there were no good publicans; Christ found some.

To the Pharisee the woman of the town was hopelessly outcast; Christ found some that He could forgive.

In fact, it was such a complex that prevented the Pharisee from seeing any good in Christ. He wished to crucify Christ, not because Christ was evil, but because Christ ruthlessly violated all of his favorite complexes.

The Pharisee lived on these complexes. They saved him the necessity of thinking about that which he disliked and of forgiving those whom he detested.

Christ could make no impression on such natures. He only irritated them. They hated Him because He refused to be a party to their unreasonable prejudices.

The spirit of Christmas is the spirit of good will. It is hostile to inveterate prejudice. It breaks down

the barriers of caste and makes of one blood all nations, sects, cults, and complexes.

To Scrooge, who had a money complex, it was not Merry Christmas but merry humbug. Any merriment that cost him money was incomprehensible to him because it cost money.

To the bitter radical, Christmas is an irritation, because it rebukes hatred and condemns bitterness.

To the one-compartment mind, Christmas is incomprehensible because the spirit of Christmas cannot be reduced to a syllogism or confined to one idea.

The world has taken kindly to Christmas for several reasons: Christmas helps trade, promotes jollity, is different from the rest of the year.

But Christmas sentiment is very different from Christian principle, just as far as the sentiment produced by an actor is from the sentiment produced by real poverty.

It is luxurious to shed tears over a mythical orphan on the stage, but dreadfully dull to help the real orphan in the alley.

How often it is that the luxury costs much more than the reality!

So, Christmas as an incident in life is very different from a Christian spirit as the controlling principle of a life.

How shall we observe Christmas? We will knock off work and give the day up to enjoyment. Fine. We will give expensive presents to our family who have much, and something to the poor who have little. Very good! We will have a good dinner and some

merry games, and see that the children have a good time. Excellent!

But yet, Christmas is Christ's birthday — the day on which we should remember Him.

How? By giving something to somebody in His name. Good! if we really give it in His name.

But, lest we forget! He said, "Do this in remembrance of me."

Surely we have not celebrated His festal day unless we have given Him that which He most desires.

And what does He most desire? That we shall give Him "ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy and living sacrifice."

It is not enough that we give Him things, or that we give things to others; He wants us to give Him ourselves. And this does not mean merely that we think of Him, or sing about Him, or even listen to a sermon. It means that we lay ourselves on the altar of His sacrifice. It means that we join the offering of ourselves to His offering of Himself, and this we do when we present ourselves to Him in the service that He commanded us to observe.

You may get something of the spirit of Christmas and leave Him out, but you cannot observe the day and forget Him.

And what is involved in your Christmas Eucharist?

Is it not that you are in love and charity with your neighbors? That whatever they have done or failed to do for you, that you put on Christ's spirit of forgiveness. That you smash your complexes. That you try to find the good in those whom you do not like and an excuse for those who have injured you.

That you put on the spirit of Christ, not for a holiday season, but for all the year. That you clothe yourself in His spirit of "peace on earth and good will to men."

Hard! Of course it is hard.

Whoever said that it was easy to get the mind of Christ?

But is is important. I can assure you that it is most important for this mad world that we get rid of our complexes and put away our bitterness. It is important that we do not add to the chaos of human selfishness, but become a force for forgiveness in order that we may experience forgiveness.

I am sure that God never attempted to create anything as difficult as the Kingdom of Heaven. He can speak the word and things obey Him—but He speaks the word to men and they curse Him.

He can so order things that they follow the immutable law which He gave them.

But He asks men to love one another and they fill the whole world with the clamor of their complexes.

It is true that there is a limit to God's omnipotence, and that limit is that He cannot force men to love Him or to forgive one another.

Even when He so loved us that He gave His Son, we so loved ourselves that we slew His love.

Greater love can no man show than to give his life, unless it be when a father or mother gives the life of a beloved son for a cause.

God so loved us because there was no other way that we could learn to love Him. He gave us His best that it might bring out the best in us. And that best

we find in opening the doors of our hearts that Christ may be born therein, and then opening those doors again that the Christ in us may go out into the world to do Christ's work among men.

You may find it hard to get rid of your bitterness, but you will never find it easier than it is now, and if you do not get rid of that bitterness you will find it exceeding hard to meet your Lord when He comes again.

The world needs Christ, but clings to its bitterness, and so the world finds chaos.

We cannot do much, each one of us, but we can add to the world's peace by eliminating all bitterness from our own hearts, and this we can do only at the shrine of Jesus Christ.

An Epiphany Thought

OVER one hundred years ago the Episcopal Church began in a feeble way to organize its missionary forces. Her methods were slow and cumbersome when compared with the rough and ready way of the Methodist circuit rider and the Baptist preacher.

Her leaders were timid and apathetic about the conversion of pioneers to her ways.

Her laity were indifferent to the call of the frontier and were well satisfied with establishing their own parishes in the older settlements.

Her volunteers to undertake the task of planting the Church in the new West were few and ill-supported.

The skirmish line of light infantry thrown out by Methodists and Baptists occupied the ground while we were getting our heavy artillery in shape for action.

Thanks to men like Bishop Griswold, Bishop Hobart and Bishop Moore, the Church became established in the original States, but even these energetic men did not see how they could do that and add any effort to man the ever-growing frontier.

There were few men like Philander Chase and Jackson Kemper, who wrestled with the problem of introducing the Church to the newer settlements. There were few men with the vision and the generosity to finance these pioneers — with the result that

we lost our opportunity in the Mid-West to make the Church strong and vigorous.

And the weakness of the Church in the Mid-West made the problem of the Church in the far West still more difficult than it would otherwise have been.

The greatest comfort in the problem arises from the fact that each decade has marked a growing interest in missions, and a deeper realization that the spirit of missions is the life of the Church.

When I was a young man no men took interest in missions, but rather prided themselves on their indifference to the subject. A few women who loved the Church studied and prayed and did what they could.

Today there is an increasing circle of men and women within the Church who realize these things.

First: That the Church has an obligation to her divine Lord to carry out His command.

Second: That the Church has a message which the world sorely needs and which the Church can best supply.

Third: That the work of missions does more to enlarge the vision of the giver than any other instrument of service.

Let us meditate upon these three considerations:

First: That the Church has an obligation to the Master.

I fear that many Christians do not worship the living God, but rather serve a definition of God.

It was in many respects a blessing that the early Christians loved Christ rather than defined Him.

It would be lovely if we could still do this, but

when the enemies of Christ began to say what He was not, the Church was forced to come out and say what He was, and so Christ became the subject of definition.

It is a very different thing for a man to accept the hypostatic union as a tenet of theology and to accept Christ as the Master of his life.

Each may be necessary but the one in no way takes the place of the other.

The accurate theologian is not a synonym for the faithful servant.

As soon as Christ becomes a living Master enthroned in Heaven, then His commands become superior to our theories. It is no longer a question as to whether I believe in missions, but it has become the question as to whether my Master commands me to go.

The soldier must not brood over the unpleasantness of his orders but he must, rather, ascertain the character of them.

Christ's command to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, indicates His will and it is our business as Christians to do His will.

I believe in missions because I am fully persuaded that my Master commands me so to do.

Second: The Church has a message which the world needs.

It is as much a matter of our concern as to whether our standards of righteousness are correct as it is whether our individual performance is exemplary. I do not know that a good Mohammedan is

more or less desirable than a poor Christian, just as I do not believe a good performer of jazz music is a better musician than a poor renderer of classical music. The performance of the one is placed against the ideals of the other.

The world is undergoing a disintegrating process because of three things which it lacks —

- (a) Reverence for God and authority.
- (b) Poise and sanity in religious expression.
- (c) None of Christ's sympathy for the sinner.

Third: That the work of missions enlarges the soul of the giver.

Selfishness is the devastating scourge of human life.

To obviate selfishness we need to do something for which we received no personal return. It is this which adheres to whatever we give to the local parish or in the community.

In giving ourselves, our souls and bodies to be a living, holy, and reasonable offering, we should give what Christ wishes of us — not that which will most profit us.

It is this aspect of giving and doing for missions that has the right reaction on the giver.

We sing: "More love to Thee O Christ," then let us do what we sing. Let us do that which the Lord hath commanded us to do because we love Him.

It is so hard to get people to see this, just as it is hard to get people to give a present which the recipient will enjoy, even though the giver cares not for it.

As Christ says, "If ye love Me, ye will keep My commandments."

It is just that. It is Christ's commandment that we assist Him in carrying the gospel to every creature.

It is an act of personal service to Him that we do this, all the more if we do it because we love Him -- not because we understand why He wishes us to make this sacrifice.

The cross of Christ is the great missionary gift.

He gave all for all men because He loved all.

He asks us to give something for all men because we love Him, and we love Him because He first loved us.

The cross was a gift to all, which few appreciate and which was wasted on many, but Christ is the lovable person He is, just because He gave, counting not the cost nor our appreciation of the cost. He gave simply because He loved — He asks us to do the same, and there is no place in which we can give as He gave to us, so readily as in Missions. Thanks be to God for His inestimable gift and thanks be to God for an adequate appreciation thereof.

Lenten Training

THE word means "spring," and spring suggests work.

But it suggests work that is profitable and for which there is a harvest in which we will reap that which we sow.

Lent is a season in which we are to break up the hard soil by penitence, and so let the Word of God be sown in our hearts that our lives may be fruitful.

And the fruits of the Spirit are love, joy and peace.

Just now the world is reaping its harvest of selfishness, hate and recklessness, and if experience is worth anything, men should have learned that we cannot have love, joy and peace unless we are willing to undergo the discipline of the Christian life. For there is no harder or more stubborn soil than these hearts of ours, and they will never bring forth good fruit unless we are willing to till the ground.

Let us then tend to our spring planting and ask ourselves what we must do.

And first we must break up the soil. "Repent" comes first in spiritual gardening. What is repentance? What is conversion? What is it to be poor in spirit?

The Greek word for repentance means to change your mind.

Not once, but frequently. St. Peter had to repent several times. He repented whenever his assurance made him feel that he was self-sufficient. So many people have one spasm of repentance, after which

they settle down to a life of inflexible prejudices. There is just one springtime in their religion and after that hardness of heart and lack of sympathy.

Repentance is a daily need, but especially in the springtime of our Church year, when we need to discover our hardness and do violence to it.

Jesus Christ loved publicans and sinners in spite of their faults; but a religion which repents but once is so hard toward sinners that, having been themselves forgiven, they forgive none who differ from them. We need to break up the heart and mind by penitence whenever it begins to harden.

A purely emotional religion lacks the sympathetic note after it has become assured that its own soul has been saved.

Conversion is to turn around. Every time we find that we have our back towards God's will, we are to be converted and turn to God.

To be poor in spirit is to realize the poverty of our own resources and the inexhaustible resources of the true riches which Christ bestows only on the humble and the meek.

Those who fancy that they are rich, He sends empty away.

Next we must sow the seed.

And the word seed means something that men cannot manufacture. All the wisdom of this world cannot fashion one grain of wheat.

Mr. Burbank may take the potato and make it larger, more edible, more profitable, but Mr. Burbank cannot make a potato out of the elements of the earth. "I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord,

and the giver of life" and I believe that "the seed is the word of God."

Now it is the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that He sows the seed of eternal life in our souls.

What is the word of God?

It is not only that the New Testament contains the word of God, but the ambassadors of Christ were entrusted with that word.

When a minister of Christ baptizes a child, he uses the word of Jesus Christ, and that word is the same by which all things were made.

Christ gave His Church not merely the written word, but He gave the spoken word to His ministers. Whoever uses the word of Christ to baptize a child acts as the agent of Christ and therefore conveys to the child the power of His word.

So when a priest of the Church celebrates the Lord's Supper, he does not use his own language, but the very words that Christ used in the institution of that sacrament.

This also is the word of God.

So also when one sent by the Master pronounces the words of absolution over a penitent sinner he is merely carrying out the word of Christ, who both forgave sin Himself and distinctly commanded His representatives that they should bind and loose the sins of men.

"Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained."

So when men are ordained, they are sent forth with the very words of Christ.

Lastly, we must cultivate the life that He gives us.

Weeds grow without man's effort, but grain brings forth fruit only as man labors.

Soil that is neglected is far worse than virgin soil.

When men neglected the soil once broken, then came weeds which were of value to neither man nor beast.

The sins of civilization are the sins of neglected opportunities. They are far worse than the sins of the savage.

Now the work of the husbandman is not exciting, but it is most important. So the means of grace which Christ has provided for the cultivation of spiritual fruits are not attained by hectic efforts, but rather by steady industry.

I wish that Christian people would learn that Christ is more concerned with the little virtues of life than with its heroics.

He who talked of the woman sweeping out her home and the man tending his sheep was more concerned with the faithfulness of everyday acts than He was of the unusual dramatics in life.

It isn't so much that we need always to be rescuing the perishing from horrible damnation as it is that we are to let our light shine steadily, brightly, persistently.

If the Church could only produce men and women who were constant in prayer; who were quick to forgive; who were loathe to wound others; who were kindly interested in others, neither talking cant nor cultivating a stony stare; who felt that every one in God's house was a member of God's family entitled to decent courtesy; who gave their share to support

the Church; who did some one thing for Christ and did it faithfully; who confessed their own sins regularly, not the sins of others; who refused to manifest bitterness toward personal injury or neglect; who were instant in season and out of season, not with excuses but service; then indeed would the Church be doing the will of her divine Master, and the lives of Christians would preach louder and better than the most eloquent preachers; and the cause of Christ would not need apology, but would command respect.

Worldly people are dull enough, but worldly Christians are not only dull, but vicious.

Then let us use Lent as a period of training in which we strive to sow the seed which Christ gives us, and carefully to cultivate the soil for which we are responsible. We know that we will never regret it; we are merely too inert to secure the blessing.

Let us not foolishly think that we are some extraordinary soil that produces crops without travail.

There is no alibi for service. You either do it or you don't.

You are either a faithful husbandman or a lazy, shiftless farmer.

Why delude yourself with the idea that you are a special exception to God's universal law?

A Lenten Duty

LENT starts with Ash Wednesday and terminates in Good Friday and Easter. It begins with our confession of sin, and ends in the penalty of sin and the victory which may emerge from suffering.

It teaches us that the wages of sin is death and that the gift of God is eternal life.

Lent, therefore, is a period of approach to the Risen Christ through His sufferings and death, and we are told by Him that there is no other way, and only as we take up our cross and follow Him, can we hope for the goal that He reached.

It is the story of man's pilgrimage through the valley of death to the Mount of the Ascension that lies beyond.

The journey starts in a descent. We go down from the smug level of our self-assurance and self-esteem.

We humbly remind God that He hates nothing that He has made. We ask Him to forgive those who are penitent.

We pray that He may put into us contrite hearts to lament our sin and to acknowledge our wretchedness. We hope to obtain perfect remission and forgiveness.

And we sum it all up in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

There is no recognition here of that cultural process by which we save our own face and approach God with perfect composure.

Instead there is a confusion of face as our sins come up before us. We are miserable sinners; we are unprofitable servants; we are disobedient children.

Many regard this approach to God as unreal and unnatural. "I have never done anything so very bad," says one; "why should I call myself a miserable sinner?"

For the same reason that you would call yourself a daubster, if you were to begin the study of art under a great artist; or, that you would hate to perform on the piano before a great master of music.

Unless you approach the mastery of any art with a consciousness of your limitations, you will never acquire very much mastery of the art.

If you press toward the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ as the goal of your life, you would be woefully unreal if you did not feel your own unworthiness.

For the character of Christ did not consist merely in the absence of wicked things; it consisted essentially in the daily sacrifices and continual services rendered to God and man; it consisted also in the absence of bitterness and the refusal to take revenge against those who constantly maligned Him; it consisted also in His comprehensive mission in which He bore the iniquities of us all.

It is not merely because Christ kept the ten commandments that He convinces us of sin: it is because Christ entered fully into the needs of human life; the cry of human misery; the victims of human injustice and gave Himself for them, that causes us to realize

that, when we have done all, we are unprofitable servants.

The beauty of holiness is only possible to the sinner who has learned to loathe the ugliness of a selfish life. So long as we are complacent in our own pettiness, we may never hope to grow into the measure of His stature.

The first step in acquiring wealth is the consciousness of poverty, and that is why poor boys are so much more apt to be money-makers than the sons of the wealthy.

The beginning of knowledge is the appreciation of our ignorance, and the man who thinks he is always right is hopeless as a student.

"Repent ye, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand" is an announcement in which only those who are conscious of their own unworthiness will ever see the need of putting on the righteousness of Christ.

This is the forerunner of the Gospel as announced by the Virgin Mother. "He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble and the meek. He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He hath sent empty away."

The Gospel of Jesus Christ was foolishness to the Greeks, just because the Greek was so sure of his culture that he needed no Saviour.

It was of such that Jesus said, "They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance." The greatest bar to the development of Christly character in America today is the assurance generally held by Americans that they are good

enough to satisfy their own requirements and that their sins are not so hateful to God as the sins of others, so why should they repent? If the experiences and utterances of Christ have any force, he, who thinks in this way, is the very one whom Christ warns constantly.

One cannot grow in grace unless one is so persuaded of his need of grace that he asks God fervently and frequently for the same.

In the Gospel for Ash Wednesday we are reminded of this same truth from another standpoint.

Christ presents it to us under the analogy of treasure, bidding us to lay up for ourselves treasure in Heaven, for "Where our treasure is, there will our heart be also."

There is very little need of urging people to lay up treasure on earth. They can see the value of earthly treasure. One needs imagination, however, to see the value of a great painting. An ignorant yokel sees nothing in it but something to destroy — or to sell if anyone can be found foolish enough to buy it.

It is the same with spiritual treasure. One needs understanding to appreciate it. As a people we lack spiritual imagination. A friend of mine was riding with a farmer early one June morning, and as they drove out of the woods they came upon a bluff overlooking a beautiful lake, which the rising sun bathed in crimson splendor.

"What a beautiful lake," he enthusiastically remarked. "Oh, I don't know," said the farmer, "it is just a lake."

So the scientific critic looks at the four gospels. To him they are just a biography.

To the business man the elements in the Holy Eucharist are just bread and wine.

To the society woman, that poor girl who comes to her door is just a beggar. To the self-satisfied man of affairs Jesus Christ is just a man.

A stupidly mechanical world, set in its standardized conventions, fails to appreciate that there are treasures of holiness, which, when appreciated, cause one to fall upon his knees and exclaim, "God be merciful to me a sinner!!"

And cause the sinner to long for the time that by the grace of God, even a poor sinner might be like Him. "Where our treasure is, there our heart will be also."

And if our treasure lies in things, our heart will long for things and be satisfied with the petty distinction that things can produce in the human heart.

But if our treasure is in Christ, then our heart will never be satisfied until it has given itself entirely to Christ, conscious of its own unworthiness, but conscious also that His grace is sufficient for us.

We can approach the holiness of God without arrogance, only as we are conscious of the sins that keep us from knowing Him as He is revealed to us in the person of Jesus Christ.

The self-seeking person who thinks to cultivate the majesty of God by assuming his own importance, will find himself guilty only of colossal impertinence.

God is a person who is tenderly compassionate toward penitent sinners, but who declines to be the

subject of patronage on the part of his creatures, no matter how important those creatures may fancy themselves to be.

The best educated men are those who are most conscious of the limited character of their education and the saintliest of men have ever been those who were most profoundly conscious of their own shortcomings.

We may approach God only as we acknowledge our own weakness in the presence of His glory.

Easter Even

ON EASTER Even we are standing between the greatest tragedy of human history and the greatest hope of human life, between Good Friday and Easter Day.

The questions arise in our mind at once why was the one necessary? How can the other be true?

Of course we would rejoice to rise from the dead if it didn't seem so impossible! But how can we hope for such beatitude when we are surrounded by such injustice?

These two great mysteries —

The mystery of darkness,

The mystery of life,

meet in the twilight of Easter Even when the body of Jesus is lying still, wrapped in the clothing of the dead and, we are told, His spirit is in the place of departed spirits, telling them that the doors of their prison shall be opened.

It all reads like a fairy tale to those who believe that the material world is the only substantial fact in life and who think that a belief in the supernatural is a foolish superstition which should not engage the serious attention of those who walk by sight and not by faith.

Of course it all depends upon our viewpoint.

If in looking at life we find that it is merely a process which is solely dependent upon physical sight and logical conclusions, then surely nothing can be required of us but physical exercise and mental gym-

nastics, but if the life of Jesus Christ reveals to us a more excellent way, then surely it is not to be explained by these processes.

And first of all, back of Good Friday and Easter lies the life of Jesus. It was in no sense an ordinary life.

Indeed, it was so extraordinary that though it has had many imitators, no one has ever even approximated it in the peculiar character of its power.

Whatever opinion we may have of His faith and nature, we cannot dispute the fact that He has exerted an influence by methods which are so deeply hidden from human wisdom that His most devoted disciples acknowledge their inability to copy them.

The influence of Jesus is totally unlike the influence of any other mortal who ever lived, both in the intensity of its power and the scope of its activity.

The unobtrusive methods by which He attained this influence are utterly unlike the influences by which other leaders have gained power over men.

And the influence which He has exerted over men is a different kind of influence than that which other men have exerted, for time has not diminished its intensity; distance is no bar to its efficacy; and differences in race and culture have not prevented men from learning the same lessons and experiencing the same grace from a personal relationship which they believe that they have with Him.

This personal power of Jesus is something which cannot be accounted for by materialists or philosophers. It is unique.

It is not strange, therefore, that churchmen adhere

to the only testimony which they have and the only explanation which explains it at all when they reaffirm their belief that "He was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary . . . was crucified, dead and buried, rose again from the dead, ascended into Heaven and from there sends the Holy Spirit to pervade and inspire the Church which in its miraculous continuity is also unique among all the organizations of mankind.

If the life of Jesus is unique, His treatment of the mystery of evil is also peculiar to Himself. He alone originated this view. The religions of mankind have been hopelessly divided in their attitude toward the explanation of sin, suffering and death.

In the Orient, matter was unreal, suffering nonexistent, death a delusion.

Among the Greeks, matter was the essential element, suffering to be avoided, death the end of all things.

Jesus differed from every philosophy which preceded His Gospels and from most of the theories that have succeeded it.

To Him matter is equally sacred with spirit. So much so that the "Word was made flesh and dwelt among us."

Suffering was not to be sought; He prayed to be delivered from it, but when it comes, it is to be endured, not stoically but humbly, with the assurance that God's goodness will overcome the diabolical nature of evil.

"It must needs be that offenses come," said Jesus. Why? He does not explain, but states the fact.

"But woe to that man by whom the offense cometh!"

In other words, the evils in life are realities and the calm endurance of them is a necessity.

The thing that must not happen is connivance with them.

To Him death is such a grim reality that He shrinks from it more than the ordinary man, but while it is the last enemy of man, it can be overcome and so He commends His spirit into His father's hands as one who confidently expects that God will overcome it.

And the curious thing is that where men accept this view of things sincerely, there are love, joy and peace.

And the power of Jesus extends further than this.

Not only did He promise to His disciples that He would see them again, but He convinced them that He did see them after His resurrection.

If He were merely a conjurer, depending upon hypnotic influence, He was indeed confident of this power if it could survive a public execution, and also succeed in transforming those who confessed that they had been cowards into those who gloried in their confidence that death could not permanently harm them.

The public execution of Jesus is as well attested as other well-known facts of history.

At least the story of the Crucifixion could not be the result of mesmeric influence.

And between the influence of Jesus as a leader and the influence of Jesus as one who had risen from the

dead, stands the cross, not only with its indubitable account of His death, but also with the attendant discouragement of His disciples.

Not only did they believe in the fact of His death; they also failed to believe in His power to rise from the death.

There was no predisposition to the suggestion of the risen Christ, if we are to believe in any degree the sincerity of His witnesses. They fully believed that their cause was lost.

They were bewildered and dismayed by their own confession.

Suddenly they were inspired with a great hope—so great that nothing afterward could ever destroy the persistence of their faith.

It is all so unusual that I must be pardoned if I regard the so-called scientific explanations of these phenomena as mere rationalization; that is, the attempt to start with a conclusion that isn't conclusive and lead up with a set of premises that would be incredible to a purely pagan audience.

I can believe whole-heartedly in a supernatural religion which explains things beyond my ken, if I believe in the credibility of its testimony; but I cannot believe in a supernatural religion which is bolstered up merely by explanations that do not explain, but only bewilder. I believe in the Christ who said to Thomas: "Reach hither thy hands, and be not faithless but believing." But I cannot believe in a Christ who could fool Thomas into thinking that he was touching something that was not there; nor could I believe in any testimony of a set of witnesses

who would deliberately concoct a story to bolster a theory.

Either the Christ as He is or no Christ will be the Saviour of the world tomorrow as He has been the Saviour of mankind for centuries.

Easter Fashions

THE WORLD loses its interest in Christ after Easter. Having commercialized the season of His Birth and the season of His Resurrection, it becomes singularly indifferent to His Ascension.

The Christmas trade and the Easter parade are perfectly harmless if they are accompanied by our real devotion to the author of these seasons.

It is meet that we should make gifts and clothe ourselves in bright raiment, if there is still room in our heart for Him.

But as a substitute for righteousness, clothes and social customs are poor stuff.

We can dress most carefully and correctly while we have a heart of a snob and the mind of a moron. Beneath social convention we may find little brains and less virtues; whereas the season of Easter reminds us that we must have a hunger for righteousness, and a capacity for friendship, and the love of worship.

The age is so concerned with the mechanics of existence that it has forgotten the joy of the sail.

The age is more concerned as to the style in which a Christian is clothed, than it is with the quality of the soul which the clothes may cover.

And the sad thing is that so many so-called Christians put the world's standard first and Christ's standard next, oblivious of the fact that whatever they may think, He will not have it that way, but

will see that the last shall be first and the first, last.

There is far more danger today of worldly fashion submerging the spiritual ideals of Christian folk, than there is hope that the advocates of Christ's gospel will carry His message into the world.

The man in the Church, who is honest, capable and obliging, is often passed by and preferment given to some shallow self-seeker who employs a good tailor and cultivates the right kind of people.

It would be humorous, if it were not tragic. It is so difficult to fancy that the Man of Nazareth, whom we call Master, is so interested in current styles as some of His prominent disciples would make us believe.

Not that one should willfully violate the rules of good society. Truly they have a tendency to cover up the beast within us, but, judging from court reports and press notices, a large percentage of well dressed people, who do the correct thing, are little better than beasts. So that in such cases, whatever man there is has been tailor-made.

It isn't that one would suppress social custom; it is that one would hope that Christian men and women would have sufficient moral strength to keep social customs from submerging the moral sense and spiritual discernment of Christians. It is a sad commentary on the time that when fathers and mothers are called upon to choose between social demands and Christian ideals, that the ideals so often go, and the poor little fish who are caught in the net of popular demand, never do get a chance to grow any bigger.

It is just this point! When are we going to develop enough cultivated Christians who are civilized enough to realize that the service of Christ must come first in their lives, and that the world cannot command in the domain of Christian influence.

In other words, we have a right to expect that Christian men and women should be strong enough to put on the garb of social conventions, without losing the soul of a Christian.

Some of the most awful catastrophies in history have been caused by the shallow selfishness of social leaders, having a Christian veneer. This was the case in the court of Louis in France and of Nicholas in Russia, where the elegant manners of the elite were submerged by the brutal anger of the proletariat.

Either God is not in Heaven, or else He declines to be patronized by the smart set.

Unless the word "gentleman" can be made to represent something deeper than mere ritual, it gradually becomes a thing so hateful to God and man, that the former will not use His power to save it from the vengeance of the latter.

There is an ominous blot in American life today.

It is a little cloud but one which may bring on the deluge. It is the present epidemic of silly Christians. Society has kept the ritual of the social era, but is contemptuous of the Christian order.

Now this may seem a small thing but small things sometimes indicate vicious diseases.

Somebody has called attention to the passing of romanticism, which means nothing more or less than

that men are losing the power of the imagination. It is evident all about us. The quality of poetry, popular music, art and architecture indicate an impoverished imagination, a degenerate idealism. The American people need the Church Year, not because it needs to keep Sabbaths but because it needs to learn the value of proportion.

Christmas, Lent, Eastertide are not mere names. They symbolize spiritual values. We need the season in which we hear the carols telling us, of "peace on earth good will to men" and "glory to God in the Highest."

We need the season of Lent, not as a fad which we patronize, but as a rule which we keep, to give us the perspective that comes from meditation and prayer.

We need the Great Forty Days from Easter to Ascension, in order that we may visualize that if we be truly risen in Christ we must seek those things that are above.

We need the Season of Whitsuntide to remind us that "as we are saved by grace and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God." And we need the Season of Advent, that we may "watch and pray lest we enter into temptation." When we have done all this, we have plenty of time left to take our place in the social order.

It is not that the age is wicked so much as that its leaders are hopelessly stupid—we seem to divide into groups who feed on the pious vituperation of frenzied evangelists without graciousness; and those who feed on the silly alterations of dress and the

shallow sound of social gaiety. And all the time, Christ and the Church are asking us to keep the true proportions of life.

“If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things that are above.”

The Great Forty Days

THE period between Easter and Ascension Day is known as "The Great Forty Days in which Jesus taught his Apostles the things pertaining to the Kingdom of Heaven." What these things are, are known only in part, because the record of His teaching during this period is very meager.

What there is, seems to indicate that He was planning for the future organization of the Church.

The longest record of any definite teaching during these forty days is that recorded in the twentieth chapter of St. John.

They were assembled in an upper room for fear of the Jews and no doubt bewildered by the turn things had taken since the resurrection of Jesus.

He had appeared to St. Peter and St. John and to Mary in the garden, but there had been no definite conference with Jesus as to the future.

So into this bewildered group of Apostles, Jesus suddenly came and said unto them, "Peace be unto you." And when He had so said He showed them His hands and His sides.

Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord.

Then said Jesus unto them again, "Peace be unto you: as My Father hath sent me even so send I you." And when He had said this He breathed on them, and said unto them, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto

them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained."

This statement must have been as startling to that little group of bewildered and discouraged disciples as was His sudden appearance.

What did it mean? What does it mean?

A good many people are so bewildered by it that they just skip over it and attach no particular significance to it.

But significant it was and vitally important it must have been.

He certainly was not bestowing upon them a personal power which they were to exercise as individuals. The thought is too palpably absurd.

There are two kinds of power bestowed upon men in the Gospels.

The one is called "dynamic" in the Greek and means the power possessed by a person who has particular talent that is his personal possession. A prophet might be said to be "dynamic."

The other was a derived power given to one who exercised some official power. This was called in the Greek—"exousia." Such is the power possessed by a sheriff in the state or by a priest in the Church.

It is evident that Christ was here bestowing a derived power upon those whom He had appointed as officers in His Kingdom.

"As My Father sent me, even so send I you," could mean nothing else than this "exousia."

So we are here admitted into a glimpse of what was going on when our Lord was teaching them the

things pertaining to the Kingdom of God, while they were with Him during those forty days.

What then does it mean?

The Creed of Christendom has been very specific in stating the purpose of the Holy Catholic Church.

We believe in the Holy Catholic Church, in which we hope to receive the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting.

I do not know how we could ever hope to receive these blessings unless God gave them to us through Christ, and so far as the forgiveness of sins is concerned, He encountered the anger of the Pharisees by claiming this power.

His Father had sent Him to take away the sins of the world and He on this occasion was sending His apostles to do the same thing that He had been sent to do.

In other words, that is what the Church was intended to be in the world. It was to be a place to which the sinner might go in order to receive the remission of sins.

The only trouble with this view of the Church is that it is too good to be true.

Of course those who are not conscious of being sinners themselves, and who are particularly censorious toward others who commit many actual transgressions, are firmly convinced that the way of are transgressor is hard and that their forgiveness is unfair.

This was exactly the attitude of the elder brother in the parable and I am very much afraid that it is apt to be the attitude of all those highly respectable

folks who justify themselves that they are righteous and despise others who are not.

This was one of the greatest obstacles which Jesus encountered. Because He ate and drank with publicans and sinners, the Pharisees murmured against Him, and in the same way those who are pretty sure of the rectitude of their own conduct are very jealous of prodigals and any favor which may be shown them.

Yet, if the Church is to be that which her Divine Master was to the world, then she must not scold prodigals but be ready to forgive them. In the words of the Master, "They that are whole need not a physician but they that are sick" and since ye say ye know, therefore your sin remaineth.

Up to the time of the Reformation there can be no question that this conception of the Church was universally held.

However badly the Church may have administered the grace of absolution, there was no question in the minds of all the faithful that she possessed this power.

The Church was the one institution in the world that was ever merciful to sinners and prodigals and lepers and outcasts.

The conditions are the same; there are the elect and the outcasts, now as then. The elect look at the Church from a cultural standpoint. They have arrived at a certain stage of spiritual culture and they would like to progress further.

Like the elder brother in the parable, they have little use for those who have wasted their substance

with harlots. They want to enjoy the estate of Christ's Church.

But Christ is still thinking more of the one sheep that is lost than He is of the ninety and nine who need no repentance or think that they do not.

And it is just here that the Church must confess its greatest failure.

It does not appeal very strongly to those who have gone out into a far country. The Church today isn't winsome to sinners as He was.

And the reason I fear is that we make too light of what our Lord said when He gave this commission to His apostles—and of what the Church says when she ordains us to the priesthood; for the Church is faithful to her trust even if her members are incapable of living up to that standard.

The pity of it is that priests who have been commissioned with these words, often make light of their significance.

I am not advocating here the system of the confessional as the only way in which this mission of our Lord's can be carried out.

The Church existed many centuries without that penitential system by which the reception of the Holy Communion must be preceded by auricular confession.

To me that is one method by which the Church met a tremendous emergency, when she was swamped by the semi-barbarian converts in the days of Charlemagne, and it remains a permissible method of dealing with sinners today.

But for good and excellent reasons the Anglican

Church refused to enforce this penitential system and left it voluntary with the sinner, nor would I recommend its restoration as practiced before the Reformation, and as practiced by the Roman Church today. It has its advantages, especially in the case of those whose sins are grievous and who cannot satisfy their own conscience, but it also has its disadvantages as a mechanical system and these disadvantages are grievous.

But this is not the question which I am discussing.

The primitive Church made much of the fact that "God hath given power and commandment to His ministers to declare and pronounce to His people, being penitent, the absolution and remission of their sins."

We also perpetuate the principle in the words that I have quoted, which we read sonorously every Sunday.

The Church is a hostel to which sinners are invited by our words but repelled by our failure to make these words seem real.

It is the mission of the Church to forgive sins—it is the mission of the priest to seek out the sinful that they may be forgiven. It is the mission of every Churchman to be a vehicle of pardon to the sinner with whom he comes in contact.

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